DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 395 116 CE 070 932

AUTHOR Mangie, Bernadette A.; Goberish, John S.
TITLE PASSAGE: "Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter." 353 Report.
INSTITUTION Beaver County Area-Labor Management Committee, Conway, PA.
SPONS AGENCY Pennsylvania State Dept. of Education, Harrisburg. Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education.
PUB DATE 95
CONTRACT 099-5011
NOTE 107p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT PASSAGE: "Your Workplace and Job Skills Information Newsletter; v6 n1-10 Sep 1994-Jun 1995

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Education; Adult Students; *Career Development; Career Education; Education Work Relationship; *Employment Patterns; Job Search Methods; *Job Skills; Labor Market; Lifelong Learning; Literacy Education; *Newsletters; *Occupational Information; Underemployment; Unemployment
IDENTIFIERS 353 Project

ABSTRACT

The main objective of the 1994-95 PASSAGE Newsletter project was to provide timely workplace and job skills information to Pennsylvania's adult learners, unemployed/underemployed individuals, adult educators, career counselors/trainers, and resource/training centers. The newsletter highlighted a variety of topics: classroom skills used in the workplace, employer expectations, job search strategies, growing career fields, labor market trends, and success stories. It maintained a hands-on approach that could be used by individuals or in whole group settings; expanded its network of educators, business professionals, and adult learners by initiating a reader survey; and encouraged telephone correspondence. Ten issues were prepared. PASSAGE had a circulation of 2,800. (The 10 issues of PASSAGE are attached.) (YLB)

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PASSAGE

"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"

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353 Report

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Project Number: 099-5011

"The activity which is the subject of this report was supported in part by the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Department of Education or the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and no official endorsement by these agencies should be inferred."

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Abstract Page

Title: PASSAGE - "Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"

Project Number: 99-5011 **Funding:** $34,816.00

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Purpose: The 1994-1995 PASSAGE Newsletter was established to address State Section 353 Priority B-6 which focuses on the production and dissemination of a special-interest newsletter. The newsletter was published 10 times a year, was eight (8) pages in length, and was devoted to adult-basic education and literacy topics. To address this priority, the 1994-1995 PASSAGE newsletter project's main objective was to provide timely workplace and job-skills' information to Pennsylvania's adult learners, unemployed/underemployed individuals, adult educators, career counselors/trainers, and various resource/training centers. No other publication similar to PASSAGE was available on a regular schedule and was specifically geared toward the educational/career-related needs of adult learners in Pennsylvania. Also, a publication that complemented other services and special projects offered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education continued to be needed.

Procedures: In order to meet the goals/objectives addressed in State Section 353 Priority B-6 and to create an innovative resource, the PASSAGE newsletter: highlighted a variety of topics (e.g., classroom skills used in the workplace, employer expectations, job-search strategies, growing career fields, labor-market trends, and success stories); established a format that was easy to read; maintained a hands-on approach that could be used by individuals or in whole-group settings; expanded its network of educators, business professionals, and adult learners by initiating a reader survey, encouraging telephone correspondence, and attending staff-development activities; utilized a professional staff of educators, job-search training professionals, and writers; accessed up-to-date information from area and regional resource centers; established a production schedule; encouraged writer contributions; and utilized state-of-the-art computer equipment for layout/design.

Summary of Findings: Many factors including increased reader feedback and reader circulation of PASSAGE, high unemployment, economic trends, employer demand for formal training beyond high school, a decrease in jobs with lower skills, and a large percentage of adults without a high school diploma continued to create the need for an innovative publication that provided educational/career-directional/job-search information to Pennsylvania's adult educators and students.

Comments: With the completion of the sixth year of publication, the PASSAGE newsletter was recognized as an established and unique resource for adult students and educational training professionals in Pennsylvania. It complemented the services and resources provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. In the 1994-1995 project year, the publication met the needs of its target audience by providing customized information specifically geared toward their special educational/career-related needs. All feedback from the readership indicated that the need for a publication that linked workplace and education issues continued to be an extremely valuable State Priority.

Products: Ten (10) issues were prepared between July 1, 1994, and June 30, 1995. PASSAGE had a circulation of twenty-eight hundred (2800). The first issue was distributed in September 1994, and the last issue was distributed in June 1995. Each issue was eight (8) pages in length. In addition to this final project report, an interim report was completed in December 1994.

Descriptors: (To be completed only by Bureau staff)

Introduction

Purposes/Objectives

The 1994-1995 PASSAGE newsletter was established to address State Section 353 Priority B-6. State Section 353 Priority B-6, as addressed in the Federal Adult Education Act Section 353 Guidelines for Special Projects and Staff Development, focused on the production and dissemination of a special-interest newsletter to be published 10 times a year at a length of eight (8) pages or longer devoted to a single adult-education topic or with each issue devoted to a particular topic of adult-basic education or literacy.

For the 1994-1995 project year, the PASSAGE newsletter's main objective was to provide timely workplace and job-skills' information to Pennsylvania's adult learners, unemployed/underemployed individuals, adult educators, career counselors/trainers, and various resource/training centers. *To meet its goals and objectives of creating a customized publication that featured educational/career-development/work-related information for Pennsylvania's adult learners and educators, the PASSAGE newsletter:*

- Featured a variety of topics for adults in transition (classroom skills used in the workplace, employer expectations, job-search strategies, growing career fields, labor-market trends, and success stories).
- Offered unique career-development resources/classroom materials for instructors, counselors, job trainers, and libraries/resource centers. The newsletter's design and purpose encouraged a hands-on approach that was utilized by individuals and in classroom settings.
- Promoted life-long education.
- Encouraged reader feedback and guest writer contributions.
- Established a look and personality that was accessible/easy to read.

- Expanded its network of educators, business professionals, and readers and provided articles that focused on innovative programs, success stories, and developing an awareness of the importance of pursuing an education to improve employment opportunities.
- Complemented the educational, workplace, and job-skills' resource materials available through the Pennsylvania Department of Education.
- Distributed twenty-eight hundred copies of the newsletter each month (from September 1994 to June 1995).

Rationale and Background

With factors such as high unemployment rates, increased educational and training requirements for many career fields, and a high percentage of Pennsylvania's residents who have not graduated from high school, the need for a publication that was written for the adult learner and highlighted the importance of life-long education and how it applied to the workplace continued to be necessary. Also, the need for a newsletter which provided classroom materials that featured hands-on workplace and job-skills' information for adult educators remained important. Research revealed that very few similar publications were available on a regular basis. Based on these facts and the previous educational/career-development/job-search training experience of the Beaver County Labor-Management Committee's staff (formerly The Midland Center, Inc.), the Pennsylvania Department of Education had approved the publication of the PASSAGE newsletter.

Time Frame

For the 1994-1995 project year, ten issues (each issue was eight pages in length) of PASSAGE were mailed to educational/employment-related programs for adults throughout the Commonwealth. During the project year, PASSAGE had a monthly circulation of 2,800.

Staff/Key Personnel

The Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee utilized four staff members, on a part-time basis, to organize and produce the 1994-1995 PASSAGE newsletter series. These individuals had training and experience in educational/career-development/job-search instruction and in the areas of writing, editing, computer operations, layout/design, desktop publishing, and outreach/communications. In addition, PASSAGE utilized volunteers for proofreading and bulk mailing each issue. *The positions needed to successfully operate the project were:*

Project Director: All funds to support this position were allocated from private-match dollars. The Executive Director of the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee served as the project director and supervised staff, monitored fiscal operations, and presented project updates to the Executive Committee and Board of Directors of the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee. A total of 185 hours during the 12-month contract year were assigned to the project director.

Project Coordinator: All funds to support this position were allocated from federal dollars. This individual coordinated monthly staff meetings, prepared fiscal and operational reports for the project director, assigned project responsibilities, and proofread and edited the 10 issues that were published during the contract year. A total of 96 hours were assigned to the project coordinator.

Writer/Editor/Desktop-Publisher: A combination of private and federal funds were allocated to support the responsibilities of this position. This staff member was responsible for writing/editing articles, adapting existing resources to suit PASSAGE's audience, editing solicited materials from guest writers, formatting the newsletter, and coordinating the research, word-processing, and bulk-mailing activities. A total of 1357 hours during the contract year were assigned to this individual.

Researcher/Word-Processor/Bulk-Mailer: Federal funds were allocated to support the time needed to conduct miscellaneous research activities, word-processing, and bulk-mailing responsibilities. A total of 553 hours during the contract year were assigned to this individual.

Volunteers: The PASSAGE staff recruited five volunteers from the community. The volunteers, business and education professionals, assisted in proofreading, writing articles, and bulk mailing the newsletter. These services were strictly voluntary.

Audience

The PASSAGE newsletter was targeted to adult learners/unemployed individuals/underemployed individuals and educational/training professionals (adult-education programs, job-search programs, and resource centers/libraries) across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Summary

Having completed six years of providing educational/career-directional/job-search information, the PASSAGE newsletter remained a useful resource that complemented the many services and materials offered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. It continued to provide much needed advice and guidelines to Pennsylvania adult learners who were in the process of continuing their education and exploring career/employment opportunities. Research and feedback indicated that this project should remain a priority for the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education.

***Additional Report Copies** -- Persons interested in obtaining additional copies of this report may contact:*

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A. Statement of the Problem.

Since the early 1980s, Pennsylvanians have dealt with high unemployment rates. Many counties once flourished from the stability of abundant industries--which today have downsized tremendously. Jobs that are more demanding will continue to emerge in Pennsylvania and throughout the United States, and most of these jobs will require formal education beyond high school. In addition, many jobs requiring only lower skills will continue to disappear. This situation continues to create a significant problem for undereducated, unemployed, or underemployed individuals in Pennsylvania.

For example...

- Nearly half of the nation's 191 million adults lack a basic proficiency in English and math skills. While the overall educational level of Americans has been on the rise, the demands in the workplace have increased at a faster rate. (U.S. Department of Education)
- Half of all existing jobs will be eliminated in the next 20 years. These jobs will be replaced by new jobs that require individuals who are educated to learn new skills and to constantly adapt to the changing work environment. (U.S. Department of Labor)
- The Bureau of Labor Statistics found that as of October 1992, only 36 percent of individuals who did not complete high school were employed within a year. The unemployment rate for all individuals who have not completed high school, those not working and actively looking for a job, was 39 percent. In contrast, 63 percent of high school graduates not enrolled in college were employed within a year of graduation, and 19 percent--nearly half the rate for individuals not completing high school training--were unemployed. (U.S. Department of Labor)

- Workers who need and receive training to get their jobs earn more annually than those who reported not needing training. (Census Bureau)
- Many of the jobs that will grow the fastest in the years ahead require at least a bachelor's degree. (U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics)
- Today, more adults than ever have acquired a post-high school degree (25%; up from 21% in 1984). (U.S. Census Bureau)
- According to government data, the average American worker is expected to change careers at least three times during his or her lifetime. Current high school graduates have been told to expect to hold at least 10 or more jobs in their working careers. A person's occupation and the amount of education he/she receives in a lifetime affect this change. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' research reveals that, on average, college graduates will stay in a particular occupation for about eight years. Individuals without a high school degree stay in one occupation for approximately five years.

These statistics reveal the importance of helping adult learners understand and practice life-long learning. Also, this knowledge affects what steps adult learners need to take to conduct a successful job-search campaign and to achieve their long-term career goals. In the 1994-1995 project year, the PASSAGE newsletter addressed these difficult challenges for adult learners. Since its first year, the publication has been custom-made for the specific needs of Pennsylvania's adult learners and has utilized an established statewide network of educators and business professionals to highlight information that assists adult learners with their educational and career-related challenges. While a variety of resources are available on this subject matter, no comparable publication made workplace and job-skills' information its only focus and targeted this material specifically to Pennsylvania's adult learners and the professionals who assist these individuals. Publications that address this subject area often fail to speak directly to the adult learner, to write for individuals who are currently unemployed, and to present material at less difficult reading levels.

B. Goals and Objectives With Which To Explore The Problem.

The 1994-1995 PASSAGE newsletter addressed State Section 353 Priority B-6, as presented in the Federal Adult Education Act Section 353 Guidelines for Special Projects and Staff Development, that focused on the production and dissemination of a special-interest newsletter to be published 10 times a year at a length of eight (8) pages or longer devoted to a single adult-education topic or with each issue devoted to a particular topic of adult-basic education or literacy.

To successfully meet the various goals and objectives defined in State Section 353 Priority B-6, PASSAGE's sponsoring organization, the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee, established measurable guidelines to monitor/ensure the effectiveness of the newsletter project.

The goals and objectives for the 1994-1995 PASSAGE newsletter included:

1. **Providing** a timely, innovative publication that addressed the unique workplace and job-skills' needs of Pennsylvania's adult learners, especially the unemployed and underemployed. PASSAGE was designed to be different from other publications. For example, no other publication similar to PASSAGE was available on a regular schedule and was specifically geared toward the adult learner's educational/career-related concerns.

While various magazines, newsletters, and books featured workplace and job-skills information, these publications did not focus entirely on material for the adult learner. A newsletter that complemented and enhanced other services and special projects offered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education continued to be needed during the 1994-1995 project year.

The main subject areas covered in PASSAGE included:

- Employer/Employee Expectations
- Classroom Skills Used in the Workplace
- Student-Success Stories
- Job-Search Strategies
- Exploring Career Fields
- Successful Programs/Services
- Counseling
- Impact of Technology
- Exploring Educational Training Opportunities
- Labor-Market Trends
- Special Needs of Adult Learners
- STUDENTaccesspage/STAFFinfopage.

2. **Producing** a customized publication that provided unique resource/classroom materials for instructors, counselors, job trainers, and libraries/resource centers. Instructors were provided with hands-on exercises (STUDENTaccesspage and STAFFinfopage) that focused on how basic skills learned in the classroom are used everyday in the workplace. A new STUDENTaccesspage or STAFFinfopage appeared in each issue of PASSAGE. Also, two special issues (i.e., Special Job-Search Issues--Part One and Two) were written specifically, for adult educators, to be adapted into classroom materials.

3. **Continuing** as a networking tool for various programs across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (ABE and GED programs and various job-training services). The newsletter highlighted inspirational programs, services, and individuals; it also promoted awareness and encouraged communication (i.e., The Job Bank).

4. **Creating** a publication that was accessible (layout/design) and was written at a reading level which was appropriate for its audience. The format of the newsletter consisted of: two (2) and three (3) columns, front-page table of contents, informational text boxes,

pictures/graphics (at least three per issue), lift-off quotes/excerpts, spacing (interline/intercolumn), a notebook format that encouraged the readers to save volumes for future reference, and carefully selected styles of body text, titles, subtitles, and bullet statements that increased readability. The 1994-1995 project year expanded upon the current layout--a two-color process, up-graded quality of paper, and binding. This improved the newsletter's professional appearance, readability, and durability for long-term usage. To ensure that the reading level was appropriate, close attention was given to: the length of the articles, sentences, and paragraphs; personalizing each article; vocabulary development; and the tone/personality of the publication.

5. **Encouraging** life-long education in an ever-changing and challenging work environment. This philosophy was written into every issue of the newsletter.

6. **Serving** as a companion publication to PDE's 353 Special Project "What's the Buzz." With different focuses, both newsletters complemented each other and provided timely information on a regular basis to programs across the Commonwealth.

7. **Complementing** the educational, workplace, and job-skills' resource materials that were available through the PDE's clearinghouses--AdvancE and the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center and through ERIC.

8. **Distributing** twenty-eight hundred copies of the newsletter each month (from September to June) to educational/career-related programs across Pennsylvania. Ten (10) issues were prepared between July 1, 1994, and July 30, 1995. Each issue was eight (8) pages in length.

9. **Establishing** accountability for the PASSAGE staff. The Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee was responsible for researching and developing information that was accurate and appropriate for PASSAGE's audience. During editorial meetings, the staff made certain that all articles were properly researched and that the material presented was timely and had statewide application.

C. Procedures Employed To Study or Explore The Problem.

During the 1994-1995 project year, the PASSAGE staff used various methods and resources to study/explore the problem. The six (6) areas that were given considerable attention and contributed to the newsletter's success were the experience of the educational staff, statewide networking, research, internal/external feedback, publication experience, and an established time schedule.

Staff of Adult Educators

The PASSAGE staff and their associate staff of the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee have extensive experience working with adult students seeking to obtain their GED diplomas and with dislocated workers, single parents/homemakers, and underemployed individuals exploring educational possibilities, career-development information, and employment assistance. Having acquired years of first-hand knowledge and having established a network of contacts, the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee's staff was a valuable resource for producing a newsletter that addressed the concerns of the adult learner.

Networking

The second area of importance was networking with educators and business professionals from across the Commonwealth. This communication aided the staff in obtaining information, articles, and resources. Rather than rely on only their own experiences, the

PASSAGE staff encouraged educators' and business professionals' participation. These individuals supplied first-hand knowledge of the educational requirements for various career fields, of changes in the workplace, of effective job-search techniques, and of self-help programs that were available. Their contributions added variety, credibility, and a unique viewpoint for the readers.

Some examples included: Marshall J. Karp, MA, NCC, LPC, Career Counselor, New Career; Susan Bowser, Case Manager, Easter Seals Centers; Roland Vendeland, Special Populations Counselor, Community College of Allegheny County; and Mary Mehler, Director, CITE (Philadelphia) . Networking was conducted through the newsletter (readers were invited to call the 800 number), at regional workshops/staff-development functions, by contacting professionals throughout the Commonwealth, at the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center, and through word of mouth.

Research

In addition to utilizing PASSAGE's experienced staff and networking with educational/business professionals, PASSAGE conducted a great deal of research before writing each issue. In order to provide timely and factual information, sources such as the "Occupational Outlook Handbook," "U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics," and the "PA State Data Center" were used when formulating articles. The Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center and ERIC were valuable sources of factual/up-to-date information during the 1994-1995 project year. Also, various publications that deal with conducting a job search and preparing for an interview helped educate the PASSAGE staff on various effective job-hunting techniques and on the expectations of the employer.

Internal/External Feedback

The PASSAGE staff encouraged reader feedback (through a reader survey and during telephone inquiries) to better understand what information suits the readers' educational/career-related needs and how the newsletter can be improved. Next, the PASSAGE staff conducted monthly editorial meetings to evaluate the effectiveness of the newsletter, to review reader feedback, and to make certain that all objectives were being met in a timely manner. Lastly, the PASSAGE staff communicated with the Pennsylvania Department of Education to make certain that all goals were being achieved.

Publication Experience

Having completed the sixth year of publication, the PASSAGE newsletter had become an established resource for adult learners and educators in Pennsylvania. During the first two years of publication, a great deal of effort was spent creating a newsletter that was unique--while trying at the same time to learn more about the audience's needs. At the start of the third year of publication, the staff had acquired many contacts and resources and began to upgrade the newsletter. For the 1994-1995 project year, all aspects of producing an effective newsletter were established and balanced.

The feedback during this project year, and over the last several years, indicated that the newsletter was meeting its intended goals and was continuing to grow and increase credibility. The experience obtained from producing this publication enabled the staff to better understand the audience, to improve its content/appearance, and to adapt to changes that occur with the audience and in the workplace.

Time Schedule

To ensure that the newsletter would best serve the audience, the PASSAGE staff had to make certain that the newsletter was written and distributed in a timely manner. Monthly schedules for writing, editing, and distributing the newsletter were established and strictly followed. The first issue of PASSAGE was delivered in September 1994, and the last issue was delivered in June 1995. (See Procedure for the Distribution of the Findings and the Product).

D. Which Objectives Were Met and How?

All goals and objectives highlighted in 1994-1995 project application were met. Specific goals and objectives included:

1. **Providing** a timely, innovative publication that addressed the unique workplace and job-skills' needs of Pennsylvania's adult learners, especially the unemployed and underemployed. The PASSAGE staff made certain that each issue contained a variety of topics that would be of interest to the readers and would meet all intended goals of the publication. This approach ensured that all benchmarks for the 1994-1995 newsletter project were met and reader interest was maintained. Utilizing a statewide network, experience, and research, each issue of PASSAGE contained at least four (4) feature articles (500 to 800 words) and at least five (5) short-interest articles (100 to 350 words). A total of one-hundred (100) articles were written during the 1994-1995 project year.

Of the one-hundred (100) articles prepared during the 1994-1995 project year:

- Twenty-five percent (25%) reported on job-skills' information of general application.
- Twenty percent (20%) focused on specific information about careers which have been identified for potential growth.
- Twenty-five percent (25%) reported on job-search strategies/tools.
- Fifteen percent (15%) reported on specialty programs and services offered by PASSAGE's associate workplace and job-skills specialists across the Commonwealth.
- Ten percent (10%) highlighted information on emerging technologies or vocational practices.

- Five percent (5%) reported on miscellaneous topics such as success stories, informational statistics, and quotes.

2. **Producing** a publication that provided unique resource/classroom materials for instructors, counselors, job trainers, and library/resource center personnel. Ten (10) specialty-exercise/activity lessons (STUDENTaccesspage or STAFFinfopage) were prepared (one per issue). This supplement provided instructors with hands-on exercises that focused on specific topics which related directly to classroom assignments (e.g., "Role Playing The Job Interview", "Mapping Your Career Path", and "Developing A Job-Search Network").

3. **Promoting** the exchange of ideas and new approaches. Networking was promoted by highlighting innovative programs and success stories from across the State. These special services and/or individuals educate, inspire, promote awareness across the State, and encourage communication (i.e., CITE). In addition, PASSAGE met with instructors, volunteers, and program operators at various Regional Workshops and Summer Institutes held during the 1994-1995 project year.

4. **Continuing** the new look and design for the publication during the 1994-1995 project year. To improve the professional quality and to increase readability, PASSAGE used two-colors of ink (instead of one), changed the color/quality of the paper, and upgraded the layout/design. *The format of the newsletter consisted of:*

- two (2) and three (3) columns
- front-page table of contents
- pictures and graphics
- lift-off quotes and excerpts
- sufficient white space (spacing interline/intercolumn)
- appropriate usage of fonts and arrangement of body text, titles, subtitles, bullet statements, and informational text boxes
- a notebook format that encouraged readers to save volumes for future reference.

In addition, the newsletter was written at a reading level that was appropriate for its audience and written specifically for its audience. Close attention was given to the length of the articles, sentences, and paragraphs; personalizing each article; vocabulary development; and the tone/personality of the publication.

5. **Encouraging** life-long education. This philosophy is needed in this ever-changing/challenging work world and was written into every issue of the PASSAGE newsletter.

6. **Serving** as a companion publication to PDE's Special Project "What's the Buzz." With different highly defined focuses, both newsletters complemented each other and provided timely information on a monthly basis to programs across the Commonwealth.

7. **Complementing** the educational, workplace, and job-skills' resource materials available through AdvancE, the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center, and ERIC. The PASSAGE staff maintained contact with, utilized resources from, and supplied information to these resource centers during the 1994-1995 project year.

8. **Utilizing** staff members/volunteers, establishing a production schedule, working with a quality print shop, and having access to state-of-art computer equipment and software, the PASSAGE staff distributed twenty-eight hundred copies of the newsletter each month (from September to June) to educational/career-related programs across Pennsylvania. The first issue was distributed before September 30, 1994, and the last issue was distributed before June 30, 1995. Each issue was eight (8) pages in length.

E. Which Objectives Were Not Met and Why?

All set goals and benchmarks established for the PASSAGE newsletter were met in a timely manner. In fact, feedback received during the project year revealed that the newsletter continued to be utilized by staff members and students of educational/ career-development/job-search programs across the Commonwealth. After six (6) years of publication, awareness continued to increase on a steady basis.

F. The Evaluation Instrument(s)/Technique(s) Used and the Results of the Evaluation(s).

To properly evaluate the success/progress of the newsletter on a monthly, quarterly, and yearly basis, the PASSAGE newsletter project utilized various internal and external feedback measures.

The three primary evaluation techniques used during the project year included:

1. **Establishing** Monthly Editorial Meetings (Internal). The purpose of the meetings was to assign articles, review feedback given from readers/staff, and ensure that all guidelines in the proposal were being followed. These internal evaluations served as a method to increase efficiency/accountability and to create an organized system for producing and improving the newsletter. PASSAGE's sponsoring organization, the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee, was updated on a monthly basis. Input was received from the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee's staff of adult instructors and career-development counselors. These individuals assisted with the writing, proofreading, and bulk mailing of the newsletter. Each issue of the newsletter was proofread by no less than four individuals. Spell-check and grammar-check programs were also utilized for reviewing and preparing the newsletter. All information presented in the newsletter was reviewed and verified for accuracy and appropriateness.

2. **Analyzing** feedback from PASSAGE's readers (External). In the 1994-1995 project year, a readers' survey was published in the January 1995 issue of PASSAGE. The survey asked the readership what information or subject areas they would like to see highlighted during the next project year, how their organizations use the newsletter, and how the newsletter can better suit their educational/career-related informational needs. Also, throughout the

contract year, readers were invited to contact the PASSAGE staff. PASSAGE's Toll Free 800 Number made this a successful and convenient method of networking with the audience and created a more personal and accessible service/product for the readership.

3. **Corresponding** with the Pennsylvania Department of Education (External). In addition to interim, financial, and the year-end reports, contact was maintained with the Pennsylvania Department of Education, on a regular basis, to discuss the progress of the newsletter, to review survey results, and to receive feedback. This contact was essential to improving the quality of the newsletter and to expanding the network of readers and contributors. (Copies of survey results were submitted to PDE staff in March 1995.)

G. The Procedure for the Distribution of the Findings and the Product(s).

For the 1994-1995 project year, ten issues (each issue eight pages in length) of PASSAGE were mailed to educational/employment-related programs for adults throughout the Commonwealth. During the project year, PASSAGE had a monthly circulation of 2,800. The PASSAGE newsletter staff adhered to the following schedule to ensure that the ten (10) issues were prepared and distributed in a timely and efficient manner. The schedule began on July 1, 1994, and concluded on June 30, 1995.

During the months of July and August, the PASSAGE newsletter staff conducted research in preparing for the new issues of the publication. Starting on August 11, 1994, the PASSAGE newsletter staff:

- Developed the editorial assignments (30 days before each issue was sent to the printer).
- Coordinated the editorial assignments (29 days before each issue went to print).
- Reviewed the rough drafts (16 days before each issue went to the printer).
- Proofread revised drafts (12 days before each issue went to print).
- Desktop published the articles into the established designs and layouts (10 days before each issue went to the printer).
- Reviewed the camera-ready proof of the newsletter (4 days before the newsletter went to print).
- Prepared bulk mailing of the newsletter and sent the newsletter to the readership (on or before the last week of the month).
- Updated the mailing list (monthly basis).

The PASSAGE mailing list was established from:

- Networking with various programs across the Commonwealth (e.g., Regional Workshops and Mid-Winter Conference).
- Word of mouth from PASSAGE's readers (instructors, program operators, counselors, and volunteers).
- Advertising from PDE publications such as "What's The Buzz" and "Freebies for ABLE." (During PASSAGE's start-up in 1989, the Pennsylvania Department of Education and "What's the Buzz" provided many of the initial names and addresses.)

The newsletter was developed, written, edited, designed, and formatted by the PASSAGE staff. The Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee's staff and volunteers assisted with the bulk mailing and the proof reading. The camera-ready copies of the newsletter produced by the PASSAGE staff were sent to a the Western Instructional Support Center's print shop in Gibsonia, Pennsylvania, for mass production and folding.

To improve the timeliness and to increase efficiency, various software packages (Corel Ventura Publisher 4.0, WordPerfect 6.0, RightWriter, ImageBase, and Marstek Scankit) were used to write, edit, and design the newsletters.

The combination of an experienced staff, state-of-the-art software/hardware, a quality print shop, an efficient data-base management, and a monthly schedule enabled PASSAGE to distribute the product in a timely and efficient manner.

H. Conclusion/Recommendations

The 1994-1995 PASSAGE project has met all set goals and has continued to expand its network of readers and contributors, to improve its layout/design, and to respond to the various needs of the audience. Upon completion of its sixth year of publication, the PASSAGE newsletter continued to provide a unique product for its target audience of adult learners, unemployed/underemployed individuals, adult instructors/counselors, programs directors, and employment/career-guidance trainers in Pennsylvania. Lastly, PASSAGE continued to complement the many programs and services funded and supported by the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education. Based on the feedback from the 1994-1995 project year and from previous years, the PASSAGE staff and the BCALMC board are confident that the newsletter has met and often exceeded its intended goals.

Volume 6
Issue 1

passage

Sept
1994

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Counseling Job Hunters in Salary Negotiation Tactics (Part One)

By Marshall J. Karp,
MA, NCC, LPC,
Career Counselor,
New Career

"How much does this job pay?" is a job hunter's usual first question during an interview. This is also Item Number One on the list of employer turn offs. Item Number Two in employer turn offs is unrealistic salary expectations.

In other words, the job seeker being interviewed may say that he/she wants ten dollars an hour while, in reality, the job might only pay half of that anticipated amount.

When is an appropriate time to bring up salary? Here are some thoughts and ideas on how to counsel and train people for this important subject.

It is understandable that salaries are often the first concern on job seekers' minds. After all, we need money to buy food and clothes and whatever. However, this is the last thing on an employer's mind. The employer's first concern is finding someone who has the appearance, dependability, and skills to do the job. Do you see the contrast? The employer wants someone to fulfill his/her needs. The job hunter wants a job - money - to fulfill his/her needs. *So, how do you approach this issue?*

Obviously, we will approach this from the employer's perspective. The employer is the one in control of the job and pay check. Job hunters must always learn to put the employer's interests first until a job offer is presented.

This is not as easy as it sounds. For some job seekers, their whole lives may depend on getting a job. Nevertheless, bringing up pay at the wrong time, in the wrong place, and in the wrong way could be the reason for rejection. What follows are two rules that will simplify salary negotiation.

Rule One - Do not bring up the salary in an interview.

Continued on Page Two

"Counseling Job Hunters"...Continued From Page One

If the employer does not bring it up, the job hunter should not bring up the subject.

At this point, job hunters may say, "But I need to know how much the job pays!" That is correct. Also, job hunters often say, "But I need to know how much the job pays before I start the job!" Equally correct. "But if I need to know how much the job pays before I start, when do I mention the salary?"

Wait for the job offer. That is right. The job hunter should wait until the employer says something like, "You have the job," or "We would like to offer you the job," or "When can you start?"

The first thing to do is to pin the employer down and establish that this is indeed an offer. The job hunter needs to ask, "Are you offering me the position?" The employer will answer, if true, "That is right." Now you can discuss the salary.

Questions: Why wait until this point, why not ask about salary in an interview when the opportunity presents itself to ask questions? The reason: A job hunter needs to invest 100 percent of his/her time, effort, and energy to reach the point of a job offer.

In other words, the job seeker's attitude always must be, "Here is what I can do for you, the employer." Anytime a job seeker asks about salary and benefits, time and attention are being focused on what the company can do for the job seeker. It takes away from the time, effort, and energy that are better directed at getting the offer.

Once a job hunter earns an offer, it is now up to the employer to sell the company to the perspective employee. This will be in the salary and benefit package. But, I emphasize, the job hunter must **EARN** his/her way to this point in the hiring process.

Here is a more practical explanation. What good is it in knowing the salary and benefit package if a job offer is not presented? The answer: It is no good at all. It is like the fish that got away.

The following is a true story. A job hunter came to a job-search training instruction session with stars in her eyes. She had just completed an interview for her dream job at a hospital. She showed off a pamphlet on the salary and benefit package and talked, glowingly, about how great the position, pay, and benefits were.

In reality, the job hunter needed to put the pamphlet away and continue with the job search until she received an offer from the hospital. Sure enough, several days later, much to her dismay, she received a rejection letter. All that was left to talk about was how big the fish was and how nice it would have been to catch it.

A person needs to ask about the salary when a job offer is made because this is vital, personal, and professional information. Too many tender-hearted job seekers are too shy and/or afraid to ask about the pay for fear that the employer will pull the job offer away from them. This is an unfounded fear.

However, until a job offer is provided, there is no commitment by an employer to hire this person. Bringing up the salary, at the wrong time, in the wrong place, and in the wrong way, may cause the employer to believe that the job seeker is interested in the money first and the position last.

After an offer is presented to the job seeker, there is commitment by an employer to a person. Careful thought and a decision-making process have taken place. The employer is not going to pull the job offer back just because a person wants to know his/her salary. An employer understands that a person has a need and a right to know this information.

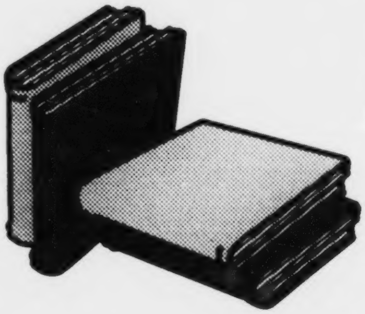
Part Two of "Counseling Job Hunters in Salary Negotiation Tactics" will appear in next month's issue of PASSAGE and will discuss steps job seekers should follow when an offer is made by the employer. ✍

Ten Commandments For Positive Thinking

1. **You** will never say no to an idea because, "It's impossible."
2. **You** will never block a helpful thought because it entails problems or wait to begin until you find a solution to every problem.
3. **You** will never oppose a possibility because you've never done it and can't imagine how it could be done.
4. **You** will never obstruct a plan because it runs a risk of failure.
5. **You** will never cooperate in defeating a good suggestion because you can see one thing wrong with it.
6. **You** will never squelch a creative idea because no one else has ever succeeded in perfecting it.
7. **You** will never declare any constructive concepts to be impossible because you lack the time, money, brains, energy, talent, or skill to exploit it.
8. **You** will never discard a plan or a project just because it's imperfect.
9. **You** will never resist an idea because you didn't think of it, you won't get the credit, you won't personally benefit from it, or you may not live to see and enjoy it.
10. **You** will never quit because you've reached the end of the rope. Tie a knot and hang on. ✍

Source: Unknown

PASSAGE Book Review:
A Book About A Thousand Things



This book, a book of discovery, is the result of the insatiable curiosity of an inquiring mind. This book is also about how an individual took his dreams and interests and created something of value not only to himself, but also to anyone who shares the same interests.

Little did George Stimpson know...it all began when he was growing up on his parent's farm. Once he became aware of his world and all of its wonders, George's questions began to flow.

He quotes, "My mother tells me that when I was still a small boy I made a considerable nuisance of myself by asking difficult questions and demanding answers."

Interest in cats, dogs, horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, chickens, trees, plants, stars, sun, moon, spiders, birds, snakes, fish, wind, thunder, lightning, and rain just naturally aroused many of his early questions.

After these questions were exhausted, there followed more questions about legends, words, sayings, songs, and stories. George's inquiring mind never stopped.

As a student, and later as a newspaper reporter, as a magazine editor, and as a Washington Post correspondent, he extended his interests to politics, government, history, literature, science, and art.

As though this weren't fulfilling enough, exotic beasts, birds, reptiles, and fish in remote parts of the world were also included as subjects of his curiosity.

He once said that he would rather visit a zoo than eat. George says, "Most of us go from the cradle to the grave seeking the answers to questions."

He has given us a volume of interesting questions and information about a variety of subjects in **A Book About A Thousand Things**.

In conclusion, the PASSAGE staff has some questions of our own for you to answer:

- "**Do** you see the benefits of asking questions?"
- "**How** can discovering the answers to questions enhance your goals in life?"
- "**What** are your dreams?"
- "**How** can you begin to set them into action?"

Book About A Thousand Things is published by Harper and Brother and can be found at local libraries. ✍

STUDENTaccesspage Focus: Procrastination

*This month's STUDENTaccesspage can be used as a classroom discussion tool or as an individual exercise. The information in this article was adapted from Dr. David D. Burns' book entitled **The Feeling Good Handbook** which focuses on methods to improve your self-esteem, to overcome obstacles, and to reach goals. Here are some suggestions that the author provided for dealing with procrastination.*

What Are You Waiting For?

You have investigated your options and decided to make a career change. You have researched the career requirements and identified your transferable skills. You have determined your salary expectations and know which companies to contact. You have practiced and fine tuned all the answers to job-interview questions, and your resume is ready. Despite all of this preparation, you still put off taking that next big step. So, what are you waiting for?

The act of procrastination is often based on the fear of consequences. We are all afraid of being rejected, of being laughed at, of appearing stupid or unpolished, or of dealing with the unknown. So we say to ourselves, "I'll start fresh on Monday morning." But, by then, the fear of rejection creeps in and, instead of calling employers to begin networking, we call a friend and tell them how we are going to start the job-search today.

By the time we get up the nerve to call a potential employer, it's late afternoon. So, we plan a new fresh start early Tuesday morning, and the pattern repeats itself. Fear has won and procrastination becomes a way to deal with fear. If you find yourself falling into this trap, consider these steps to break this cycle.

#1. Expect obstacles. You will not reach all of your contacts on the first try. However, if you realize that you will encounter difficulties, you can overcome them with perseverance. Set a goal to contact employers until you have achieved a certain number of appointments for interviews. Remember to make that number realistic and attainable.

#2. Tune out negative thoughts. You may be feeding yourself unrealistic negative messages that block your job-search efforts. Take the time to write down all the negatives you are feeling. Once you identify these thoughts, you will be able to cancel the negative effect they have on you.

#3. Give yourself credit. We often forget to count the good things we do. No matter how small the achievement, be willing to give yourself a pat on the back for it. If you do not allow yourself to feel good about your accomplishments, you will soon find yourself not making the effort.

#4. Little steps lead to big feats. Do not wait for the "right time" to begin. The best way to get a job search started is to break the process down into "manageable" steps, such as: The Initial Contact(s); The Conversation(s) to Get the Interview; The Interview Process; and The Follow-Up. This will eliminate the feeling of being overwhelmed by the entire process.

By recognizing the tasks you don't want to complete and the reasons why, you can break the procrastination stronghold. When you set goals and reward yourself for achieving them, you can stay focused on the task of the job search. Accentuating the positive and eliminating the negative will keep you motivated throughout your job search.

What are you waiting for? ✍

***The Feeling Good Handbook** by David D. Burns, M.D. is published by William Morrow and Company, Inc., New York, New York and can be found at your local library.*

The Job Bank: Agencies Working Together To Help Others

By Gwen Fry, Intern, Easter Seals Centers

It started with a simple idea of one business sharing a job lead with another and led to a collaborative group effort to help individuals find jobs. Today, that collaboration, which now includes a network of social service, government, and private rehabilitation agencies with goals to find employment for people, is known as the Job Bank.

The Job Bank serves the residents of Butler and Armstrong/Indiana Counties in western Pennsylvania. The organization originated when Citizens National Bank requested an employee through the Easter Seals' Supported Employment Experience (ESSEX).

The ESSEX program assists individuals with cognitive and physical disabilities and helps them find career-path positions in private industry. Because the ESSEX program did not have a candidate to fill the requested position, the position was shared with other agencies until a qualified candidate was found. This led to the recognition that coordination would help all agencies better serve their clientele.

Monthly meetings are held for members of the Job Bank to discuss and exchange ideas and information about current job leads, area job trends, and career-focused topics.

"Making people aware of jobs that exist in our three-county area and helping them develop career independence are two of our main objectives," said Janis Unks, coordinator of the Job Bank and also the supervisor of ESSEX. "Basically, our job is to help find jobs for others."

Funded by the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, the Job Bank receives information about job openings through different sources including newspapers, want-ads, media advertisements, word-of-mouth leads, networks, the Job Center, university-career services, referrals, and job-development services. After the leads are gathered, the Job Bank then compiles and distributes them to their members.

"For example, if an employer gives us a lead, we research the position to see whether our clients would qualify for it. If not, we share the information with our members to find another potential employee," explained Susan Bowser, assistant coordinator of the Job Bank.

However, the Job Bank doesn't just benefit the employees; it benefits employers as well by giving them access to a larger pool of potential employees. This free service prescreens job candidates. Workers bring dependability and leadership to the job as well as a solid safety record, low absenteeism, and employment stability. Some agencies participating in the Job Bank also support the newly-hired employee through job coaching.

Since the first time a job lead was shared among three organizations, the Job Bank has grown. With 50 different organizations in their network of agencies, the Job Bank would like to expand their network of ideas and information to outlying counties.

"We would like to 'connect' with other counties by inviting other agencies and organizations to share information about job trends, upcoming career seminars, and job leads. The Job Bank helps our clients find jobs, but it also helps us keep up to date in our profession," Janis said.

If you or your organization would like more information about the Job Bank or would like to become a member, please call (412) 283-1010.

PASSAGE would like to thank Susan Bowser, Case Manager, Easter Seal Centers, Butler County, for her assistance.

Job-Search Assistance...Choose Carefully.

Unfortunately, when employment is difficult to find in the job market, a large number of career-counseling businesses and job-listing services begin to appear...almost miraculously. While many such agencies may be legitimate and straightforward, there are some agencies that are only in business to exploit the job seeker. This article will provide you with tips on how to avoid career-counseling businesses that do not have the job seeker's best interests in mind.

The first point a job seeker should realize is that there are many fine and reputable organizations that provide job-search assistance. For example, employment agencies and temporary services are in business to find you--the job seeker--employment. There are basically two types of employment agencies--private employment agencies and government-sponsored agencies.

While the government-sponsored employment agencies do not charge the job seeker for finding employment, the private agencies charge a fee which is paid by the new employer or the person receiving employment. However, a reputable private agency will only charge you after you have successfully secured employment from the use of their services.

With a temporary service, individuals are placed in short-term positions. The temporary service earns a percentage of your wages only when you are working on a job that the service has secured for you. This type of agency makes no money when you are not working.

Finally, there are a great number of non-profit and government funded projects (Department of Education, Department of Labor, Job Training Partnership Act, Single Point of Contact, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, etc.) that provide unemployed and underemployed individuals with job-search skills' training and job-placement assistance and that do not charge a fee to eligible individuals.

Know exactly what you are receiving for your money and make sure that you have this information in writing.

A majority of the services available to job seekers provide helpful and honest assistance. However, job seekers need to be aware of the few "rotten apples" that exist in the area of career counseling or job-search assistance.

Realizing that unemployed individuals are in a vulnerable position and need assistance, certain agencies target job seekers and charge them a fee for a variety of services such as access to the hidden job market, job-search training, and career-counseling. These organizations are different from employment agencies that charge a fee only if they secure employment for a client. At career-counseling firms or job-listing services, a fee is charged before any services are provided, and the fee is non-refundable.

While not promising employment, these agencies give the job seeker the impression that he/she will find employment and will remain a priority to the agency until a job is found. Once they have your money and provide job-search counseling sessions, job-search materials, and/or employment listings, their commitment to you is completed.

The services these companies provide and the individuals they target vary. One type of agency, a job-listing service, may charge clients $80.00 (perhaps for a two-month period) to view an "exclusive or special listing of job openings" which supposedly are available before they are announced to the general public. This type of service is mostly targeted at both high-school and college graduates.

Continued on Page Seven

"Job-Search Assistance"...Continued From Page Six

These services are cleverly advertised in the help-wanted section of the newspaper and often resemble an actual job listing.

Other questionable agencies, whose markets consist of job seekers, include career-counseling firms. These agencies usually target experienced workers and individuals who have educational training beyond high school. Individuals can be charged several hundred to several thousand dollars for services that are designed to refine their job campaign and locate potential employers who could utilize their particular talents. These services are also advertised in the newspaper's help wanted section.

The bottom-line is that there is no refund--whether you get a job or not. In addition, most of the assistance from these agencies does not give the job seeker a great advantage in the job market.

Here are some suggestions that you can follow to avoid getting trapped by agencies that exploit job seekers:

- **Avoid** agencies that make statements such as: "You should have a job in two weeks", "We can help you tap into the hidden job market", or "Almost everyone we help finds employment." If it sounds too good to be true, it most likely is untrue.
- **Know** exactly what you are receiving for your money and make sure that you have this information in writing. In general, don't pay for any job-placement services from a private agency before you actually receive employment.
- **Ask** to speak with current clients and clients who have secured employment.
- **Avoid** agencies that make an effort to separate potential customers from clients who have already paid a fee. For example, the office area where you inquire about services may have a different entrance or even location than where clients receive training and/or review job-search materials.
- **Find out** how long the company has been in business and ask about the educational background/experience of the staff.
- **Contact** the Better Business Bureau or the state attorney general's office to find out more information about the agency you are considering for career assistance.
- **Don't** sign a contract until you have done your research. How long will they work with you, what services are provided, and how many sessions will be provided?
- **Don't let** the company pressure you into signing a contract or paying money until you are certain that this is the right step for you.
- **Never rely** on one method of conducting a job search. Even if you are working with an agency, you should continue to use a variety of methods such as networking, government employment agencies (no fee for services), classified ads, volunteer work, job fairs, and job clubs to generate job leads and obtain interviews.

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"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"

Editors: Bernadette Mangie, Director, Education and Support Programs; John S. Goberish, Communications

BCALMC Consultants: Richard Carland, Workforce Education Specialist; Beverly Covatch-Dicken, Literacy Support Specialist; Alex Garcia, Executive Director; Alice Green, Technical Advisor; Greg Hill, EAPC Coordinator; and Lee Katroppa, GED Instructor.

***For more information,** call 1-800-345-5443 or write to: PASSAGE, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.*

Inspirational Quotes

"There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure."
General Colin L. Powell

"When patterns are broken, new worlds can emerge."
Tuli Kupferberg

"The only right time to look down on others is when you're helping them up."
William Arthur Ward

"The Wright Brothers flew right through the smoke screen of impossibility."
Charles F. Kettering

"Aim for success, not perfection. Never give up your right to be wrong, because then you will lose the ability to learn new things and move forward with your life. Remember that fear always lurks behind perfectionism. Confronting your fears and allowing yourself the right to be human can, paradoxically, make you a far happier and more productive person."
Dr. David M. Burns

Check Your Attitude On The Job.

HRStrategies, an international human resources' consulting firm, conducted a survey entitled HRStrategies' 1994 Survey of Human Resources Trends. The survey was based on a nationwide sample of more than 900 respondents and found that employers' satisfaction with new hires had fallen since its last survey in 1991. The employers who where surveyed seem greatly concerned about employees' work motivation, willingness to take responsibility, effectiveness when working in teams, and ability to attend to the needs of the customer.

Tip: As a job seeker or as a new employee, make an effort to convey the appropriate work attitude as well as establishing your skills and abilities. Your positive attitude may be the deciding factor that lands you employment or creates the opportunity for job growth. *What attitude are you projecting in the interview or on the job?*

Meditation Can Alleviate Job Stress.

According to a recent report in **Business Week**, research that has been conducted on the benefits of meditation has convinced some national corporations (Adolph Coors Co., Marriott, and Polaroid) to utilize mind-over-matter exercises and training to help employees deal with stress. This technique has been successful in establishing methods to cope with stress, to improve one's focus, and to learn the values of relaxation.

Salaries Are Improving For Working Women.

A recent finding from the Pennsylvania State Data Center indicates that the gap between working men and women is starting to close. (Traditionally, on an average--working women usually make less money than males in almost all job categories and levels of education.) The report stated that between 1980 and 1993 women's salaries rose from 57 percent to 70 percent of men's salaries. ✍

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Sept 1994

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Volume 6
Issue 2

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October
1994

Your Workplace and Job Skills Information Newsletter

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- > Thirty Better-Paying Occupations That Will Grow (Page 4)
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Educational Trends and Statistics

Did You Know That...?

Today, more adults than ever have acquired a post-high school degree (25%; up from 21% in 1984).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Why Are People Attending College?

The two most important reasons noted by incoming students for deciding to go to college were to get a better job and to make more money, according to "The American Freshmen: National Norms for Fall 1992."

The Community College Advantage

An article by Nancy Fitzgerald in the January/February 1994 issue of **Careers & Colleges** magazine reports that enrollment at community colleges has increased in the last five years by 23 percent, with over half of all first-time college students in the United States signing up for community college courses. Students have found they can study the basics and then transfer to a four-year school to complete their studies for a bachelor's degree, usually at a substantial savings in tuition, housing, and transportation expenses. Other advantages included smaller class sizes and associate degree programs not offered at universities.

Employment Averages for Graduates

The Bureau of Labor Statistics found that as of October 1992, only 36 percent of individuals who did not complete high school were employed within a year. The unemployment rate for all individuals who have not completed high school, those not working and actively looking for a job, was 39 percent.

In contrast, 63 percent of high school graduates not enrolled in college were employed within a year of graduation, and 19 percent--nearly half the rate for individuals not completing high school training--were unemployed.

Occupational Outlook Quarterly, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Summer 1994.

Career Highlight: Physical Therapy Assistants and Aides

Introduction

Has the idea of providing a helping hand in the therapy of individuals who are recovering from physical injuries ever interested you? If so, then you may want to consider a career as a physical therapy assistant or aide. This article focuses on the growing field of physical therapy and the steps needed to successfully prepare for the educational and career opportunities in this field.

Job Duties

Physical-therapy assistants and aides, whether working with elderly patients after a surgery or athletes after an injury, help prepare these individuals both physically and psychologically for therapy. All preparation for this therapy is supervised by a licensed physical therapist. *The two main objectives of therapy are to:*

- **Prevent** a permanent disability from an injury or illness.
- **Improve** the patients' ability to function in everyday life.

The educational requirements, licensing standards, and job duties of assistants and aides are different. In general, assistants are licensed by their State Board of Medical Examiners and are required to have an associate's degree. Aides are not licensed and need to have at least a high school diploma or equivalency. Assistants have more responsibilities and can perform more functions than aides.

The physical therapist assistant is responsible for:

- **Instructing** patients in a variety of treatments. Treatments can include exercise on a treadmill, on a stationary bike, with weight lifting equipment, or by swimming.
- **Administering** massages, ultrasound treatment, electrical stimulation, hot/cold packs, and traction.
- **Recording** patients' body measurements and assessing their flexibility and range of motion.
- **Using** data (under the direction of a therapist) to fit patients with orthopedic braces, prostheses, or other supports.
- **Monitoring** the patients' progress during treatment and periodically reporting both abnormalities and achievements to the therapist.
- **Communicating** with the patients, their family members, and supervising therapists to ensure the patients' needs are being met.

The physical therapist aide is responsible for:

- **Helping** to make all therapy sessions productive. This involves cleaning the treatment area and organizing/preparing it for each patient's specific therapy.
- **Escorting** the patients to and from the treatment area.
- **Encouraging** patients during therapy and ensuring that exercises are performed correctly.
- **Alerting** the therapist or assistant if patients have difficulty with a particular treatment.

Both assistants and aides are responsible for various clerical duties. These duties often include conducting an inventory of supplies, ordering supplies, maintaining patients' records, answering telephones, utilizing computer software for data entry, and completing patient information forms.

Work Environment

Physical therapy assistants and aides can work for a hospital or a private practice. The hours/days and full-time/part-time positions vary depending on the facility. In fact, many facilities have evening and weekend office hours to better accommodate their patients.

The nature of the work requires that assistants and aides are strong enough to assist patients with their treatment. Constant kneeling, stooping, and standing for long periods of time are all necessary parts of the job.

Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

Educational/Training Requirements

As mentioned earlier, physical therapy assistants typically have an associate's degree from an accredited physical therapy program and are licensed by their State Board of Medical Examiners. Most States require assistants to pass written examinations to be fully licensed. Additional requirements often include certification in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and a specific number of hours of clinical experience. In 1993, there were 133 accredited physical therapy programs in the United States.

An accredited physical therapy assistant program lasts two years or four semesters. Programs are usually located at community colleges and are divided into academic study and hands-on clinical experience at a hospital or clinic. Academic coursework includes algebra, anatomy, physiology, biology, chemistry, and psychology.

Clinical experience involves the students receiving hands-on training at a hospital or private practice under the supervision of health-care professionals. Both educators and employers view clinical experience as an essential part of ensuring that students understand the responsibilities of a physical therapy assistant.

Physical therapy aides are required to have a high school diploma or equivalency. In addition, aides should have strong interpersonal skills and a basic desire to assist people in need. Aides receive clinical training on the job. Individuals interested in becoming an aide should brush-up on communication skills (writing and speaking), math skills, and the sciences.

Job Opportunities

Physical therapy assistants and aides held 61,000 jobs in 1992. Over half work in hospitals or private physical therapy offices. Others work in clinics, nursing homes, schools, and even inside patients' homes. In sports medicine, these individuals may work part of the time on the sidelines at sporting events.

According to many employers, there is a shortage of licensed assistants working in the field of physical therapy. Through 2005, employment of physical therapy assistants and aides is expected to grow 93 percent, which is more than four times faster than the average for all occupations. *Factors that will contribute to the rising need for workers in the field of physical therapy include:*

- The median age of Americans will continue to increase. The average person is living longer and will require more assistance.
- Many employers are having difficulty finding qualified candidates for openings.
- Greater emphasis is being placed on shortening expensive hospital stays and increasing outpatient treatment. By increasing the role of assistants, more patients receive care at a lower cost.
- Shortages of highly paid physical therapists in many areas make hiring licensed assistants an attractive alternative.

Earnings

Information on job earnings for this career field varies; however, research indicates that starting salaries for physical therapy assistants averaged between $24,000 and $28,000 a year in 1992. Starting salaries at hospitals tended to be lower than salaries at private practices. In an effort to attract skilled assistants, hospitals offer their employees more career choices and chances for advancement. Also, at hospitals, there are more opportunities to work varied patient populations.

For Additional Information

If you are interested in obtaining information on a career as a physical therapy assistant and aide and a list of schools offering accredited programs, write to:

The American Physical
Therapy Association,
1111 North Fairfax
Street, Alexandria,
VA 22314-1488.

Adapted from "After the Fall: Physical Therapy Assistants and Aides", Allison Thomson, The Occupational Outlook Quarterly, United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Summer 1994

Some Views on Lifelong Learning

> "In a world that is constantly changing, there is no one subject or set of subjects that will serve for the foreseeable future, let alone for the rest of your life. The most important skill to acquire now is learning how to learn."

John Naisbitt

> "If you look at the new economy, it's an economy of ceaseless change. Jobs are created. Jobs are destroyed. Companies are created. Companies are destroyed...The bottom is dropping out of our economy for people who lack the education and skills to participate. In this new economy, lifelong learning is not just a nice thing. It's a necessity."

William A. Galston, Deputy Assistant for Domestic Policy; Education Week, June 22, 1994

> Recently, Labor Secretary Robert Reich was asked what workers in the United States should do to prosper in the uncertain economic future. His response was -- "Get skills."

> "The world is moving so fast these days that the man who says it can't be done is generally interrupted by someone doing it."

Harry Emerson Fosdick, Clergyman

Job Predictions For The Future

30 Better-Paying Occupations That Will Grow

Job	Job Growth (in 1,000s of jobs)	1992-2005 (in percent)	Median Pay ($ per week)
Registered nurses	765	42	662
Truck drivers	648	27	418
Systems analysts (computers)	**501**	**110**	**810**
Teachers, secondary	462	37	610
Marketing/sales supervisors	407	20	479
General managers/top executives	380	13	NA
Teachers, elementary	311	21	567
Accountants/auditors	304	32	600
Clerical supervisors/managers	301	24	523
Teachers, special education	**267**	**74**	**550**
Licensed practical nurses	261	40	413
Human services workers	**256**	**136**	**479**
Computer scientists/engineers	**236**	**112**	**810**
College/university faculty	214	26	799
Corrections officers	**97**	**70**	**470**
Physicians	195	35	1,007
Lawyers	195	31	1,085
Social workers	191	40	489
Financial managers	174	25	764
Computer programmers	169	30	685
Automotive mechanics	168	23	408
Radiologic technicians	102	63	543
Personnel/training/labor relations	102	36	610
Police/detectives	92	13	529
Electrical/electronic engineers	90	24	892
Paralegals	**81**	**86**	**489**
Physical therapists	**79**	**88**	**682**
Insurance adjusters/examiners	72	49	430
Producers/directors/actors	69	54	673
Psychologists	69	48	665
National Median Wage, 1992			***381***

Note: *Jobs in bold show over 70 percent growth.*

Sources: *Knight-Ridder analysis of data from Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Commerce Dept.*

The Benefits of Fitness Programs

A study of Steelcase Corporation by the University of Michigan found that medical claims for those who participated in a company fitness program were 55 percent lower than those who did not participate over a 10-year period. Employees benefit by being healthier and more productive. At the same time, employers benefit from increased productivity and employees who cost the company less money.

STUDENTaccesspage Focus: Painless Lessons Through Storytelling

By Roland Vendeland

Mr Vendeland is a professional storyteller and the Special Populations Coordinator at the Community College of Allegheny County, Monroeville, Pennsylvania

An attorney who does his own television commercials recently told me that his most important educational experience was his participation on his college debate team. From debate, he gained the confidence needed to appear in court and on television.

Sidney Harris, a syndicated newspaper columnist, has often found himself writing articles about interesting tidbits which he discovered while searching for totally different information.

These examples illustrate how a process or skill can transfer or lead to other areas and provide many benefits. Similarly, I discovered that, while teaching storytelling techniques to children and adults, the process of learning stories for retelling enabled these individuals to acquire other skills.

These skills include:

- Listening
- Inferential Reading Comprehension (reading between the lines)
- Oral Presentation

In addition, the skills acquired from storytelling can also be beneficial during a job-search campaign and in the workplace. Storytelling can help individuals:

- **Assemble** information in an organized manner. This can be beneficial for preparing a business presentation or a list of skills and accomplishments for a job interview.
- **Establish** confidence in their presentation skills and ability to communicate various ideas and provide examples.
- **Become** more relaxed during situations which require public speaking. Storytelling is a challenging form of public speaking, and relaxation comes from practicing the process of public speaking.

These are my recommended steps for one to become a storyteller and to, incidentally, acquire the listed transferable skills. Select stories that are available in book form, on video tape, and on audio cassette. You will need to find stories that are available on all three formats. If you cannot find a version of a story on audio cassette, you can use the video tape and simply turn away from the television screen for this portion of the exercise.

* 1. **Select** a story to retell.

** 2. **Listen** to the entire audio tape of the story.

3. **Write** the story in phrases without reference to the book or tape.

***4. **Read** the same story from the book.

5. **Fill** in "missing" phrases without reference to the book or tape.
6. **Retell** the story to classmates using phrases.
7. **Revise** the story until it "makes sense".
8. **Reduce** your phrases to ten phrases.
9. **Retell** story using the ten phrases.
10. **Reduce** ten phrases to ten terms.
11. **Retell** the story using the ten terms.
12. **Have** classmates critique your story content.
13. **Retell** the story without use of notes.

****14. **Watch** the video of the story.

15. **Discuss** significant discrepancies between your story and the video version.

Continued on page 6

STUDENTaccesspage...Continued From Page Five

Sample Exercise

Here is an example of reduction of phrases to terms for the story "The World Gets Wisdom".***

Reduction #1

1. Sky god gave spider all wisdom in world.
2. Spider decided to keep wisdom for self.
3. Placed wisdom in clay pot.
4. Tied pot around neck.
5. Climbed silk cotton tree to hide pot.
6. Slid down tree.
7. Climbed back up tree.
8. Slipped down tree a second time.
9. Attempted to climb tree again.
10. Son Kuma suggested he place the pot on his back.
11. Spider became angry.
12. Spider broke pot.
13. Wisdom spread.
14. People gathered wisdom.
15. Plenty for you and plenty for me.

Reduction #2

1. Sky god gave spider all wisdom in world.
2. Spider hoarded wisdom in clay pot.
3. Tied pot around neck.
4. Climbed silk cotton tree to hide pot.
5. Son Kuma called out to put pot on back.
6. Spider became angry.
7. Spider broke pot.
8. Wisdom spread.
9. People gathered wisdom.
10. Plenty for you and plenty for me.

Reduction #3

1. Sky god
2. Spider hoarded
3. Neck
4. Tree
5. Kuma
6. Angry
7. Broke pot
8. Spread
9. Gathered
10. Plenty

Now that you have the story content down pat, practice a distinctive style (e.g., phrasing, emphasis, and humor) and delivery (e.g., voice modulation, eye contact, and gestures).

Repeat the process with a dozen stories. You are now a storyteller. You are also a better listener, an improved reader, and a more relaxed presenter.

Try this approach in the classroom. If your classmates leave the room when you open your mouth, you are...but that's another story!

* ***Cap O'Rushes, Clever Manka, Zlateh the Goat***

** *Available through Roland the Storyteller, P.O. Box 4719, Pittsburgh, PA 15206 (412)422-8874 or use the audio portion of the video tape.*

*** *Stories appear in Steck-Vaughn Literature Library,* ***Folk Tales From Around The World***

**** *Videos available through Allegheny Intermediate Unit*

***Cap O'Rushes**, Journal Films*

***Clever Manka**, Journal Films*

***Zlateh the Goat**, Weston Woods Studio*

More Inspirational Quotes

"The reward for work well done is the opportunity to do more."
Jonas Salk, M.D.

"The closest to perfection a person ever comes is when he fills out a job application form."
Stanley J. Randall

"The will to win is not nearly as important as the will to prepare to win."
Bobby Knight

"To be upset over what you don't have is to waste what you do have."
Ken S. Keyes, Jr.

"The man who removes a mountain begins by carrying away small stones."
Chinese Proverb

passage

"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"

Editors: Bernadette Mangie, Director, Education and Support Programs; John S. Goberish, Communications

BCALMC Consultants: Richard Carland, Workforce Education Specialist; Alex Garcia, Executive Director; Alice Green, Technical Advisor; Judy Dzumba, Program Support Staff; and Lee Katroppa, GED Instructor.

For more information, *call 1-800-345-5443 or write to: PASSAGE, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.*

Counseling Job Hunters in Salary Negotiation Tactics (Part Two)

By Marshall J. Karp, MA, NCC, LPC, Career Counselor, New Career

In September, the first part of this article discussed Item Number One of Salary Negotiation which is knowing when to discuss salary in the interview. This second part explores Item Number Two which includes researching salary expectations and knowing how to respond to salary questions before and after a job offer has been made.

So, what if there is a job offered, or what if the employer brings up a salary question in an interview without a job offer? In either case, there is Rule Number Two in salary negotiation which is...Never give the first figure.

In football, they say there are three things that can happen when the ball is in the air, and two of them are bad. The good thing that happens is a reception. The two bad things are an interception or an incompletion. In salary discussions, there are also three things that can happen by giving the first figure, and two of them are also bad. The one good thing that can happen is that a person can be right on the salary range or figure. The two bad things that can happen are being too high or too low.

Bad Thing One is giving a figure that is too high. The employer may assume that the job hunter might not be happy at this place of business, and the job hunter may be anticipating more pay which could lower his/her expectations and cause dissatisfaction.

Bad Thing Two is giving a figure that is too low. This could be a confidence issue. Employers may wonder, "Is this how the job seeker perceives his/her ability to do the job? Will he/she only do the minimum to get by, as opposed to the maximum of his/her capabilities?"

So, what is the actual answer to the question, "What is your salary expectation?" The appropriate response is to answer this question by asking, "How much does this position pay?" At this point, many employers will give their range or figure, and the job hunter does not need to worry about giving a figure that is too high or too low.

What if an employer knows salary negotiation tactics and looks back at a job hunter and says, "I asked you first. How much pay are you expecting?" Obviously, this is not a ping-pong game so the job seeker needs a response. Your response should come from prior preparation and research. This will allow you to find an accurate figure or range for the salary.

This research can be done in the library with such books as: *The Occupational Outlook Handbook, The Enhanced Guide for Occupational Exploration, The Professional Career Series, Careers Without College Series, The Encyclopedia of Careers and Vocational Guidance*, and many other fine books. A reference librarian is available for assistance and can steer a job seeker to the appropriate resources.

Also, federal and state employment service offices keep labor-market information and statistics, which include salary surveys. Call your local or state office of the Employment Services or the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Armed with this information, when you are faced with the "I asked you first" situation, the response is "According to my research, I have found the salary range to be between ________________ and ________________." With this prepared response, the employer may agree that the information is accurate and that the range the job seeker states is well within the salary offer the employer will make. At this point, a job hunter knows what to expect.

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Continued from page 7

However, the employer may not agree and comment about the range being too high for his/her company. Local prevailing wages usually pay less than inflated national averages. Here the job hunter's response is, "As I said, that is what my research shows but that is not necessarily my range. What did you have in mind?" Here is where an employer probably will offer his/her starting pay. If not, at least a job hunter has an idea that the pay will be lower than his/her researched figure.

Now, Critical Thinking Skills' Time.

Example A. A job seeker is filling out an application form and the question on the application is "Minimum starting salary expected?" How do you answer? Follow Rule 2: Do not give the first figure. Merely write the response, "Will Discuss in the Interview."

When called to the interview and the employer asks for clarification of the response to this question, follow Rule One. Ask, "How much does this position pay?" After all, the employer introduced the subject. If need be, use the salary research and information.

Another Critical Thinking Skills' Problem

Example B. A job seeker is reading a want ad in the paper or sees a job posting for a position he/she wants. The pay figure or range is listed in the want ad or posting. The job seeker is filling out an application or the question comes up in an interview, "Salary expected?" How should the job seeker answer the question?

The answer is: The job seeker should mirror the want ad's figure or range. This follows Rule 2 because the company gave the first figure. To write "Will Discuss" might count against a job seeker's chance for an interview. An employer could think "I listed what the salary is. Maybe this person wants more."

Finally, on the subject of asking about future raises or benefits, job hunters should follow Rule One. Establish the certainty of the job offer. Make sure you are on firm footing before attempting to climb higher.

To close, the proper attitude is putting the employer and his/her needs first. In business, as in life, "what goes around comes around." When a job seeker helps an employer get what he/she wants and puts the employer's interests first, usually the job seeker gets what he/she wants. In this case, employment.

PASSAGE would like to thank Marshall J. Karp, MA, NCC, LPC, Career Counselor, New Career, for his time and contribution to the newsletter.

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Volume 6
Issue 3

passage

November
1994

Your Workplace and Job Skills Information Newsletter

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The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

Nine Tips For Continued Success In The Workplace

Recently, Knight-Ridder Newspapers published an article by David Everett and John Lippert entitled--"It's Your Job: And If You Want To Keep It You Have To Work At It." The article listed nine tips to help employees stay on the right track and be survivors in the increasingly competitive job market of the 1990s and beyond.

The nine areas where they suggested that job seekers concentrate their efforts include:

- Learning the right skills.
- Learning how to think.
- Learning how to communicate.
- Learning how to learn.
- Being creative.
- Being aware.
- Being mobile.
- Preparing for the worst.
- Taking responsibility.

Let's take a closer look at the nine tips to develop a better understanding of the importance of each suggestion and how they can positively impact your career and employability.

1. Learning the right skills. The days when an individual could obtain a good job and earn a middle-class income with a high-school education or less are ending. Today, job seekers need to conduct research to see what career fields are growing and to make an effort to anticipate the future changes that will occur in the workplace (old jobs or processes being replaced by new jobs and concepts).

Once you complete the appropriate educational training for your field of interest and secure a job, you need to constantly expand and update your skills to stay current and to meet the needs of the employer and the customer.

2. Learning how to think. In the modern workplace, employees need to be able to contribute to the problem-solving process, analyze the quality or effectiveness of a service or product, and follow detailed instructions. Employers expect employees to be more active or participative members of the organization.

Continued on page 2

"Nine Tips For Success"...Continued From Page 1

3. Learning how to communicate. With greater involvement in the decision-making process, employees who can be self-directed (able to finish a task without much supervision or help) and can function in a team setting are valued by today's employers. Employees who can present ideas during meetings, work effectively with fellow coworkers/group members and managers, and deal with customers/suppliers will survive and adapt in the workplace.

4. Learning how to learn. As mentioned briefly in point one, the importance of just learning a skill is not enough. Many factors, such as technological changes, customer needs, and economic conditions, can affect the skills and responsibilities related to a particular job. For example, computer programs are upgraded on a regular basis and what you learn today may be outdated in three years. Also, in a situation where an employer decides to downsize (reduce the number of employees), the change will most likely increase the remaining employees' responsibilities and will require them to expand their skills. Don't wait until you are forced to change before you adapt this philosophy.

5. Being creative. Employees are often the individuals who work closest with the customer or who best understand the various aspects of a product/service. Many employers realize the knowledge and potential creative ideas that employees may have obtained from their experiences. When you enter the workplace, strive to step forward with your ideas and be prepared to take some risks that can help the company and can expand your abilities. Examples of creative ideas can range from establishing a better system for processing customer orders to organizing a work schedule for working parents that might include flex-time and job-sharing. Creative ideas are limitless.

6. Being aware. Make an extra effort to stay up-to-date with what is happening in your workplace and in your career field. You can stay in touch with these changes by talking with managers, coworkers, and business associates; reading newspapers and magazines; and listening/watching the news.

The information you obtain should include general topics (i.e., what is happening in the world, country or your community), career-related news (i.e., changes/trends in your chosen career-field), and workplace-specific information (e.g., new computer programs, team-building efforts, expanded job responsibilities, or product/service quality).

7. Being mobile. The chances are great that most people will have worked for many different employers by the time they are prepared to retire. Unfortunately, in the current job market, a significant number of companies is likely to go through some type of downsizing, relocation, transition, or closing of their operations. Understanding this reality, job seekers stand a better chance of survival if they are willing to move to a parent facility, a new company, a new town, or a different field or industry.

Don't be a job hopper--changing jobs on a frequent basis and in an unorganized manner. This will not look good to a potential employer. However, be flexible, be aware of future changes/possibilities, and think of your long-term goals and dreams.

8. Preparing for the worst. While we really don't like thinking about it, everyone should be prepared for unexpected job loss. Have a back-up plan in case your company closes its doors or you are suddenly laid off. Have an updated resume, a list of job contacts, and enough savings to last you through a job-search campaign.

9. Taking responsibility. Whether you are involved in a job-search or are currently working, learn to be responsible for your educational and career growth. Don't expect others to plan your future or create stability in your life.

Use these tips as a guideline in all phases of your career. Remember, the workplace is changing. Roles and responsibilities are evolving. These suggestions can be beneficial to all types of workers--from professionals with college degrees to skilled-factory workers. Take an active role in your career, have a plan, expect change, and prepare for change. ✍

Workplace Trends and Statistics

How Will The Aging Population Impact The Workplace?

By the year 2000, almost 59 million Americans will be 55 years of age or older, reports FIND/SVP of New York. The huge growth of the mature population will have drastic effects on society. This age group spends less than the national average for households, especially on food, clothes, entertainment, and insurance. The markets expected to grow in response to the maturing population include food, financial services, health care, and travel.

Leasing Services vs. Temporary Employment Services

Have you ever heard of professional employer organizations (PEOs)? PEOs are leasing companies, and the presence of these organizations in the labor market seems to be growing.

Different than temporary employment services that hire employees for short-term positions that are only available for a brief period of time (i.e., several days to several months), PEOs hire employees under a leasing arrangement, and employees are assigned to a job indefinitely.

On record, PEOs are the actual employer, and they hire workers and lease them back to the employers. In general, PEO employees are required to have higher skill levels/experience than temporary workers. A significant percentage of these employees fit into the professional and technical category. Also, the large number of individuals employed by PEOs creates an opportunity for better benefits and medical coverage.

Employers find PEOs beneficial because these leasing companies handle much of the employee paper work/administrative duties, have a pool of skilled employees who are available when business is strong, and have knowledge of safety and legal issues that are important to both employers and employees. These factors enable employers to save time and money and to focus on production and the marketplace.

The National Association of Professional Employer Organizations estimates that there are now more than one million leased employees in the U.S. In addition, the number of leasing companies has grown from 98 in 1984 to 1,264 in 1991.

Home-Study Programs

The Distance Education and Training Council (DETC) estimates that 300 or more institutions offer home-study programs. These programs provide individuals with the opportunity to learn a new skill or to work towards a degree or certification that their busy schedules and commitments may not have otherwise allowed.

Recently, more colleges are offering credits through televised lessons where the only time students enter the classroom is to take an exam. Many correspondence schools (training programs that exchange information by mail) have obtained accreditation (meets specific educational/training requirements of a program/career field) from their trade groups and are adding computer-based instruction to the classes they offer students.

Individuals who utilize home-study programs are often called distance learners. According to the DETC, most of the two million distance learners taking courses accredited by the DETC are in their late 20s or early 30s, employed full-time, and seeking either a second income or job upgrade. Successful graduates are typically self-starters and have persistence.

Information on agencies and accredited institutions is available in a publication called the ***Accredited Institutions of Post-Secondary Education*** *and is published by the American Council on Education. For a free copy, write the DETC at 1601 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.*

Are You Considering College?

Here Is What Employers Value...

The ability to accept responsibility, honesty, and integrity is always an important indicator of job performance, say employers who hire new college graduates. In a survey of more than 600 businesses, industries, and governmental organizations, employers of new college graduates were asked to rate 65 factors by level of importance.

Among the factors rated:

- "Almost always important as a job performance indicator" were sincerity, eagerness, decision-making skills, critical thinking, initiative, professional attitude, and oral communication and verbal skills.
- "Sometimes important" factors included leadership in extracurricular activities, numerical and mathematical aptitudes, research and investigative skills, and quality of college or university attended.
- "Seldom important" indicators were athletic team achievements, laboratory experiment reports, intramural sports participation, and samples of long research papers.

Source: Occupational Outlook Quarterly, Summer 1994 ✍

Small Business In The U.S. Economy

According to "1994 Small Business Issue Priorities," sponsored by National Small Business United, the National Association of Women Business Owners, and Arthur Anersen's Enterprise Group, approximately 21 million businesses in the United States (nine out of 10) are considered small. These are firms that employ fewer than 500 employees.

The report states that small businesses comprise the fastest growing sector of the U.S. economy and are the driving force of the economic recovery. The report highlights the impact of small business during recent years.

Some highlights include:

- **Small** businesses provided all of the net new jobs from 1987 to 1992.
- **Small** businesses employed 54% of the private work force in 1990.
- **Small** businesses provide two of every three new workers with their first jobs.
- **Small** businesses contributed 40% of the nation's new high-technology jobs during the past decade. ✍

Some Views On Creativity

Creativity is...

- digging deeper.
- plugging into the sun.
- shaking hands with tomorrow.
- singing in your own key.
- not being afraid anymore.
- cutting holes to see through.

By E. Paul Torrance, from the video series, **The Creative Spirit**, Ambrose Video Publishing, Inc.

On the subject of creativity, mathematician Albert Einstein made the following statements:

- A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new.
- Creativity is contagious--pass it on!
- Most people look at what is and never see what can be.

Harvey Mackay, author of the best-selling book ***Swimming With The Sharks****, believes:*

- There's no future in saying it can't be done.
- Guarantees? There are none in this life, but there are creative ways to better your chances.
- Human survival itself very often depends on a kind of future vision, seeing oneself in specific situations as a healthy, thriving, creative person. ✍

Reality Is Fun: The Benefits of Humor and Creativity

"Nothing is funnier than the unintended humor of reality."
Steve Allen

Humor and creativity are essential parts of Dr. Joel Goodman's weekly job duties. He is on the staff of the **Humor Project** and **Laughing Matters** magazine and has dedicated much of his time to speaking at seminars and producing resources that highlight the similarities and benefits of using humor and creativity in everyday life.

Whether it's at work, in school, or at home, he believes that humor is everywhere and in all aspects of life. In addition, he emphasizes that humor and creativity enable us to deal with stress of all types and to look at reality in a fresh, even fun, perspective.

In his presentation *"Take Me to Your Laughter: The Haha--Aha Connection"*, Dr. Goodman spoke to business professionals and community participants at The Positive Power of Humor and Creativity First Annual Conference. The presentation (which is available on audio tape) provided useful suggestions on how to let humor and creativity impact and improve situations that often create stress or difficulties.

- **Give** yourself permission to engage in nonsense, trusting that a creative solution to a problem will follow.
- **Let** humor and creativity turn you into an "inverse paranoid" -- a person who thinks the world is out to do him/her good.

- **Choose** a famous person who you admire and consider humorous. Ask yourself what traits and qualities make that person special. Also, ask yourself how this person would handle various stressful situations that you might encounter. This approach can give you a new perspective to a problem and provide some distance from your difficulties.
- **Use** the processes of reversal (doing the opposite of what you would normally do) and exaggeration (expanding beyond the limits of the truth or set boundaries) to create a new perspective or angle on reality. Reversing, exaggerating, and having fun with an idea, concept, or practice can help you laugh at what not to do and gain new insight on the right things to do.
- **Experience** the many flavors of humor and creativity. Remember, people have different personalities and styles. What one person may consider humorous or creative may not have the same effect with another person.
- **Understand** that while the results of humor and creativity can be magical, the process of applying humor and creativity is not all that mysterious. There are specific skills, activities, and guidelines we can call upon to make creativity and humor happen. Think of practical ways you can bring these qualities to life before stress has a chance to take over.

In our efforts to improve our personal situations, Dr. Goodman reminds us that, "Humor brings us to the here and now...and that is where you experience joy."

For more information on this topic and resources, write to: The Humor Project, 110 Springs Street, Saratoga Springs, New York 12866.

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"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"

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Focus: Role Playing The Job Interview

Purpose

This exercise will not only help job seekers practice answering interview questions, but it will also help them obtain a better understanding of the needs of employers through role playing.

What is Needed?

All that is needed to conduct this exercise are two people, pencils, paper, a little imagination, and the willingness to expand your knowledge.

How To Begin...

1. Divide into groups of two. This exercise can work just as well in a classroom setting and can make an excellent discussion tool. *(The exercise will take approximately one hour.)*

2. Both team members are to choose a job that they are interested in obtaining. Think of your dreams. What career field would you like to enter? Try to choose entry-level positions.

3. Next, the two individuals will choose to be either the employer/interviewer or the job candidate.

4. The job candidate will let the interviewer know what job opening he/she has chosen for the exercise.

5. With this information, the interviewer will begin to prepare questions for the role-playing session. Have some fun with this exercise. Take fifteen minutes to prepare your interview questions. Try to actually picture yourself as the employer. *To help prepare your list, ask yourself the following questions:*

   - **What** are the day-to-day responsibilities of this position?
   - **What** skills and abilities are important for this position?
   - **How** much educational experience is necessary to be successful in this position?
   - **Can** this person help the company?
   - **What** is the employment background of the job candidate?
   - **What** type of personality traits are needed for this job?
   - **Why** is this person looking for employment?
   - **Is** this individual self-directed or team oriented?

   Expand these ideas and write your own list of questions. Be creative. Try to prepare 15 to 20 questions.

6. At the same time, the job candidate will take fifteen minutes to think about his/her skills, abilities, and experience. Try to focus on what the demands are for this position and to predict the employer's expectations for this job. Also, think about important questions that you may want to ask the employer. Remember to always focus on your strengths and keep a positive attitude.

7. Now the time has come to conduct the interview. Begin the interview with a handshake and an introduction. Then let the employer start the interview with a question. Allow 15 minutes to conduct the interview.

8. Upon completion of the interview, reverse the roles (the interviewer will now assume the role of the job candidate) and repeat the exercise.

9. After both individuals have had the opportunity to play each role, organize the class and discuss/compare your experiences. As a group, answer the following questions:

   - **What** common questions were asked by each interviewer?
   - **What** questions were difficult for the job candidates to answer?
   - **What** would you do next time to better prepare for an interview?
   - **What** were the benefits of role playing both the interviewer and the job candidate?

Maintaining a Positive Attitude and Achieving Job Satisfaction

"If I could just get this job...then everything will be alright."; "This job will solve all of my problems."; and "I can't wait to get a fresh start." Have you heard these statements before? These are the normal and positive thoughts that cross the minds of most new job seekers as they anxiously prepare to enter the work force.

However, once you have secured employment at a new place of work and the initial thrill of obtaining a job has subsided, you need to be aware of the many negative factors that can affect your job performance and satisfaction.

Here are some issues that can create negativity and diminish your job satisfaction and some suggestions that can help you remain positive and true to your goals:

- **Blaming** someone because your current career situation is not the way you had planned it. Some people blame the labor market, society, career counselors, their employer, or past career decisions they have made for themselves. *Suggestion*--Remember, you need to be responsible for your career decisions. Don't blame your situation on others and don't punish yourself for personal decisions that have created difficulties. Understand that mistakes will occur and use them as valuable learning tools. Take the time needed to focus on your goals and to make the appropriate changes--retraining, new outlook, or a new job.
- **Having** difficulty balancing your job and family/home responsibilities. This creates a situation where both responsibilities are so demanding that everything seems to be neglected and that there is a lack of focus. *Suggestion*--Organize yourself and establish a plan to help you get back on track and fulfill all of your responsibilities. This may include obtaining the help of your spouse, family, or friends. Establish a balance in your life.
- **Comparing** your salary with your coworkers' earnings and maintaining the general belief that you are not respected and are underpaid. *Suggestion*--Focus your energy on making your job more enjoyable and, at the same time, work on upgrading your skills and increasing your knowledge/abilities. This will help you open more opportunities with your current employer and with potential employers. Create a situation where your skills and abilities can't be ignored by your employer.
- **Becoming** isolated and having little contact with fellow coworkers. While negativity exists in every workplace, friendly relationships and enjoyment on the job are important to establish. *Suggestion*--Gossip is negative; however, avoiding contact with coworkers can be equally damaging. Work to establish good lines of communication with coworkers and supervisors. Teamwork can be a rewarding experience for all involved.
- **Dealing** with the effects of layoffs or closings. Typically, workers become extremely frustrated during this type of transition. Workers usually feel guilty because their friends have lost their jobs, find that their workload has increased, and/or have to deal with pay cuts or freezes. *Suggestion*--If this is your situation and you want to improve your job satisfaction, you will need to adjust to the new structuring at your place of work. Comparing it to the way it use to be will only cause frustration. Remind yourself of your personal goals and look for new opportunities at your place of work.

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- **Being** influenced by the negative attitudes of coworkers. These individuals have problems with the company and want others to share in their negativity. *Suggestion*--Avoid getting involved in negative conversations. Make an effort to redirect the subject matter to more positive topics. Gossip will benefit no one.
- **Getting** frustrated with work that is repetitive. Employees in this situation become bored with the same day-to-day routine, do not feel challenged, and treat work as an activity that just "pays the bills." *Suggestion*-- Again, make an effort to gain new skills and show your employer that you are serious about new challenges. Use slow periods and breaks to enjoy the company of your fellow coworkers. Take advantage of the enjoyable aspects of your work and learn to recognize the hidden treasures.
- **Disagreeing** with the approach or style of a supervisor/boss. These individuals have to make difficult decisions and have a variety of different management styles that can create friction. *Suggestion*--Concentrate on doing the best you can on the job and work at meeting all of your employer's expectations in a timely manner. Keep the communication channels open with your boss. Don't expect anyone to be perfect; managers and employees can make mistakes. Also, never lose your positive attitude.
- **Bringing** problems from the home into the workplace or establishing a lifestyle that is more expensive than the job can support. These problems not only affect the concentration/performance of the troubled employee but also the coworkers. *Suggestion*--Avoid letting problems outside of the workplace affect your job. Seek to find solutions to your problems at home.

  If you need counseling, many employers offer employee assistance programs (EAPs) which can provide help to employees and their family members (e.g., stress, financial problems, depression, substance abuse, and life crises). It is difficult to deal with anything, including your job, when your mind is focused on a problem.
- **Dealing** with limited opportunities because you have not updated your job skills or received retraining for your job which is becoming obsolete. Another example may include a company which has downsized and has limited the number of challenging job opportunities available to the remaining employees. *Suggestion*--Realize your situation and take a fresh look at your career plan. Ask yourself what changes need to be made to get back on track (retraining, relocation, a new employer), and begin those changes immediately.

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Volume 6
Issue 4

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December
1994

Your Workplace and Job Skills Information Newsletter

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Finding Success and Happiness On The Job

"If I could make $50,000 a year, I'd be happy." "If I could just be the boss, I would have control of my life and would be happy." "Jobs in this career field have always been available, and there should be plenty of money and opportunity. This would make me happy." "I could spend my entire career at this company."

What information are you using and what priorities have you established to help you choose a career field? What factors will be important for maintaining your personal job satisfaction? Last month, the article "Maintaining A Positive Attitude and Achieving Job Satisfaction" discussed how to avoid many negative factors that occur on the job and how to focus on the positive. Continuing to explore this subject area, this article takes a look at what makes successful workers happy with their jobs and what factors are truly important when choosing an occupation.

The information presented in this article was taken from a series of formal and informal interviews. The variety of individuals who were interviewed held jobs ranging from construction and maintenance workers to managers and directors. Everyone who participated was successful at what he/she does and was happy with his/her career choices.

The first areas that were discussed included money, job security, and opportunities for promotion. Everyone who was interviewed agreed that these are important factors when considering a job and finding job satisfaction. However, interestingly enough, most participants who were interviewed agreed that these factors do not create long-term job satisfaction or real motivation to create a standard of work excellence.

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In other words, money, security, and promotions should not be the main reasons for choosing a particular career field or keeping a job. These factors are the extras that may, or may not, be a part of your chosen career path and/or place of work.

With the fact that many companies are continuing to downsize and many high-paying jobs have experienced a tremendous reduction in workers and/or salary rates, basing your job satisfaction and reason for motivation entirely on financial gains may cause you a great deal of difficulty and unhappiness in the job market.

For example, one individual who we talked with chose a career as an airframe and powerplant mechanic. At the time he entered a two-year training program in 1990, certified airplane mechanics' starting salaries were between $10 and $14 an hour, and experienced mechanics could expect to receive between $14 and $23 an hour. Also, at the time, the school he attended had a 90% placement rate, and jobs in that field were readily available. However, when he graduated, the airline industry had begun a major transition which caused many airlines to shut down, downsize, contract work to smaller companies, or freeze hiring practices/salaries.

With one of the highest grade point averages in his class of 90 students and certification in hand, he began his job search. After seven months and a great deal of effort, he obtained a mechanic's job at an organization that maintained and repaired mid-sized aircraft. To his surprise, the salary was lower than he expected, and there was little room for advancement. After several months, he became unhappy with the job and realized that he had chosen a career field based on its promise of financial security and that he really wasn't passionate about airplane maintenance.

He felt that his situation would have been different and more manageable if the career field had sparked a personal and genuine interest in him. Sacrifice is easier to handle when you are involved in something you love and are moving toward your goals. Remember, there is nothing wrong with wanting to be comfortable and making a decent living, but success and happiness on the job require much more.

So, what factors lead to true and meaningful job satisfaction? People are motivated for many different reasons and have diverse talents and interests. Factors that contribute to a person's happiness with his/her occupation can range from simple to complex and from attaining basic personal needs to chasing elaborate dreams and aspirations. Each person has a different definition for success and is ultimately responsible for creating his/her job satisfaction.

Here are some of the common factors assembled from our interviews that seemed to motivate people and create job satisfaction on a meaningful level and on a long-term basis.

Examples included jobs and careers that enable individuals to:

Boost self-confidence/develop as an individual - Being able to complete a job successfully, earning acceptance, and learning something new about one's abilities are important job benefits for many workers. They seek employment that makes them feel good about themselves and their abilities and that allows them to grow professionally.

Access special interests or talents - Most people have a special skill or talent that they may or may not realize or even appreciate. Some individuals who greatly value their talents and have a close connection with their abilities require employment which enables them to express these abilities.

Feel challenged - These individuals need to push themselves to new limits. They get bored quickly with work situations that are repetitive and have little variation. The excitement of something new and different is of great importance to these individuals.

Help others in need - Some individuals obtain job satisfaction from helping others and making a particular

Continued on page 3

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contribution to society. Making life easier for those who are experiencing difficulty or who are less fortunate is the primary source of their job satisfaction.

Be creative - Some individuals enjoy the process of problem solving and introducing new ideas, approaches, or procedures. Job satisfaction is gained from expressing personal concepts and being a part of the creation, growth, and evolution of a company, product, or service. For these workers, change and challenge need to always be present.

Interact with people - Many individuals enjoy working closely with customers and coworkers on a daily basis. They have a need to interact in a positive manner and express their unique personalities and interests when working with other people.

Learn new skills - Some workers require job situations that change and that are never the same process over and over again. They find joy in learning new skills, improving their talents, and acquiring knowledge.

Provide structure and purpose - These individuals need an organized structure and system to follow. They often enjoy working in a team setting. They have much to offer a company, but they are seldom self-directed and need/seek guidance.

Enjoy the work environment - Some workers choose employment that allows them to work in a particular setting such as the beach, the mountains, or a popular center of social activity. The surroundings make the job interesting and appealing to these individuals.

Have responsibility and accountability - Oftentimes, individuals seek job opportunities that allow them to organize and direct projects. They want to be directly responsible for the success of their efforts and are effective at developing/organizing tasks and people.

Obtain recognition for their work - For some workers, there is a definite need to be recognized and/or respected by managers, coworkers, and customers for their efforts and accomplishments. Job satisfaction is received from doing an excellent job and from getting noticed and praised for these efforts.

Create quality and establish a sense of pride - These individuals enjoy completing a job and maintaining a personal standard of excellence. It is a personal challenge and drive for this type of worker to produce something of quality.

Keep active and be productive - Certain individuals can be motivated from the satisfaction of working a full day, keeping busy, and producing quality work. They thoroughly enjoy the feeling of having accomplished something when they go home each day.

Did you see anything that connects with your personality and specific needs? What choice(s) would you use to base your career decision? To help you begin to answer these questions, use the STUDENTaccesspage on page four as a starting point to explore your interests and career needs. ✍

"Happiness is not a state to arrive at, but a manner of traveling."
Margaret Lee Runbeck

Some Views On Goalsetting

"A man without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder." **Thomas Carlyle**

"The most important thing about goals is having one." **Geoffrey F. Abert**

"Until input (thought) is linked to a goal (purpose) there can be no intelligent accomplishment." **Paul G. Thomas**

"There is no achievement without goals." **Robert J. McKain**

"This one step--choosing a goal and sticking to it--changes everything." **Scott Reed**

"People with goals succeed because they know where they're going." **Earl Nightingale**

"If you don't know where you are going, how can you expect to get there?" **Basil S. Walsh**

"The indispensable first step to getting the things you want out of life is this: decide what you want." **Ben Stein**

"Purpose is what gives life meaning." **Anonymous**

STUDENTaccesspage

Focus: Mapping Your Career Path

John Wareham, founder of the executive search firm Wareham Associates and author states, "The challenges are to map a career path that allows you to support yourself and express yourself. The ideal is to derive income from work that you love. Most people seldom try to do this."

If you are considering your career options, use the following questions to begin the exploration of your potential career path:

1. What are your personal interests?

2. What talents or special skills do you possess?

3. Are you a creative person?

4. Do you enjoy challenges?

5. What types of activities would maintain your interest?

6. Can you work in pressure situations and with many set deadlines?

7. What types of hours/schedules are you willing to work?

8. Do you prefer to work alone or with a team?

9. Do you enjoy having contact with the public?

10. What causes do you support?

11. Does the idea of starting your own business and dedicating yourself to a business excite you?

12. What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?

13. Do you have a support network (family and friends) to help you?

14. What financial assistance is available to you?

15. What educational and employment-related assistance is available to help you identify and plan your career goals?

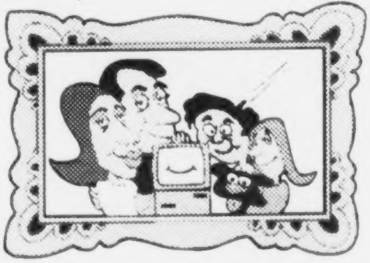
16. Where do you see yourself in three years, five years, ten years, and twenty years?

17. List the types of activities that would make you truly happy, productive, and secure.

Don't expect to have a plan or even a solid idea immediately. This is the beginning of your exploration. Take the time needed to make the right decisions for the right reasons. ✍

Workplace Trends and Statistics

Home-Based Activities: Work, Education, and Family



- Today, approximately 12 million Americans run home-based businesses or freelance as consultants, reports Link Resources, a New York City research and consulting firm. In addition, the number seems to be growing at a steady rate.
- In a recent national workplace survey, workers listed "personal and family life" as the second most frequently cited reason for taking a new job.
- The number of students receiving their education through home schooling has increased from 350,000 to one million in the last four years.

✍

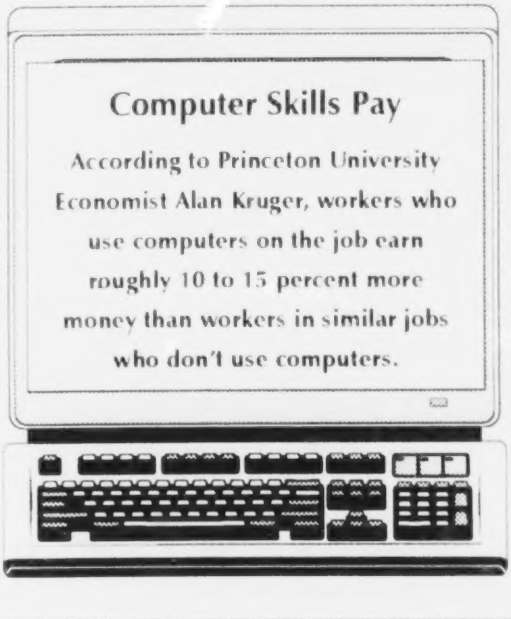
Entrepreneurs In The U.S.

People (entrepreneurs) who want a career working for themselves can develop their own businesses. The opportunities do exist. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, over 10 million members of the United States labor force (16 years of age and older) worked for themselves in their own unincorporated businesses in 1992. Another 3.5 million people head their own incorporated enterprises and can be considered self-employed even though, technically, they are salaried employees of their corporations.

Service occupations and executive, administrative, and managerial occupations had large numbers of self-employed workers in 1992, and self-employment is expected to increase much faster than average within these occupational groups through 2005.

Marketing and sales occupations accounted for much self-employment, even though the number of self-employed workers in these occupations will grow much more slowly than average from 1992-2005.

Two other large groups--professional specialty occupations and precision production, craft, and repair occupations--include many detailed occupations with a high share of self-employed workers. ✍



Computer Skills Pay

According to Princeton University Economist Alan Kruger, workers who use computers on the job earn roughly 10 to 15 percent more money than workers in similar jobs who don't use computers.

Technology and Communications

In the not too distant future, most people in the United States will be able to have an all-purpose telephone number. This is a single telephone that operates at home, at work, in the car, or basically anywhere else the user travels in the United States and eventually throughout the world.

This new breed of mobile phones will eliminate the need for separate listings for home, office, and the car. With this technology, callers will be calling a person--not a place.

Currently, this service is being tested in a few U.S. markets and could be available within the next year or so.

Imagine how this technology will simplify and improve the efficiency of business and personal communication. How else will this service affect the fast-paced modern workplace? ✍

Workplace Trends and Statistics

Baby Boomers Vs. Baby Busters

In the books "Generations" and "13th Generation", author Neil Howe discusses the characteristics of the baby boomers (born between 1950 and 1960) and baby busters (born between 1961 and 1981)--also referred to as Generation X, the 13th Generation, and twentysomethings. From his research, he finds that both generations need to better understand each other's priorities, values, approaches, and motivations.

While it is unfair to stereotype and to make general statements about each generation, both have certain unique characteristics and backgrounds. Baby Boomers, in many cases, are in management positions, have more than 10 years of work experience, tend to have greater loyalty to the company, are often viewed as workaholics, have an organized system for day-to-day duties, and like to use mission statements (goal/purpose of a company).

Baby Busters tend to be more independent, more willing to take risks, and more likely to challenge the established methods, procedures, or standards of the way a task is completed on the job. Also, they tend to focus more on results, have more faith/loyalty in individuals than the company itself, and have a different work ethic and view about dealing with authority and working extra hours.

Also, the culture that the baby busters experienced was different than baby boomers. For example, there were higher levels of parental divorce, less parental authority, more working mothers, increases in crime, and fewer job opportunities and lower wages.

Regardless of these findings and the perceived stereotypes, both boomers and busters need to work at understanding each other's situations and what has influenced their approach to work. This knowledge will help both generations focus on each other's strengths and unique qualities. Both have something great to offer and can learn much from each other.

Smoking in the Workplace

Did you know that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has been conducting hearings on a proposal that will, for the most part, place a ban on smoking in every workplace in the nation? This includes factories, offices, bars, restaurants, indoor sports arenas, and even catered wedding receptions.

Basically, it affects anyplace where people work. This proposal will potentially have an impact on a total of 92 million workers in 6 million workplaces throughout the U.S. However, it does not apply to private homes or personal cars used for business.

The proposal will require all employers to either ban smoking or provide a designated smoking area that is enclosed and ventilated directly to the outside. The agency wants nonsmokers to have "zero exposure" to this substance.

Here are some current statistics that highlight how smoking and health issues have already affected the workplace:

- The Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that 85 percent of businesses in the U.S. had adopted some form of smoking controls by 1991, up from 36 percent five years earlier.
- According to the National Cancer Institute, smoking is a costly issue for today's employers. It is estimated that employers pay an average of $1,000 a year extra for every employee who smokes. Studies also indicate, smoking takes its toll on productivity because smokers are absent from work 50 percent more often than nonsmokers, have twice as many on-the-job accidents, and are 50 percent more likely to be hospitalized than workers who do not smoke.
- Today, more than 40 states and the District of Columbia have already enacted some form of legislation to restrict smoking in the workplace, and 11 states have restricted smoking in the workplace.

The hearings are scheduled to begin this month; however, it may take up to 10 years before this regulation can be put into effect.

The Changing Workplace: Dual-Function Jobs

Many changing factors such as cost-cutting, the overall environment, and technology can directly impact the workplace. With these constantly changing factors, some jobs that, in the past, had only one function or title are being combined with other separate jobs or functions. A job that has been combined from two different and seemingly unrelated occupations into one position is often called a "dual-function job".

For example, the roles of receptionists and security personnel are starting to be merged together in many workplaces. What caused this doubling of jobs? First, there are many obvious cost-cutting advantages for security companies who recruit, train, and employ workers and for employers who utilize the services of security companies. Secondly, this new trend is a direct response to the rise in violence on the job.

Receptionist are usually the first employees to encounter the public, customers, workers, and any dangerous situations that might occur. If a difficult situation developed, the receptionist's job would be to call security to settle the disturbance. By utilizing the dual-function position, the difficulty is handled in a direct and more efficient manner.

This combination of jobs will require many individuals to expand and upgrade their skills. For the day-to-day duties of a receptionist, individuals employed in this dual-function job will need to have solid communication skills (in person and on the telephone), a friendly attitude, accurate record keeping abilities and distribution of messages, organizational skills, and computer skills (security functions, word processing, and records).

Security personnel in these dual-function jobs will need to check the identification of visitors, provide information, monitor the building or work area, and have access to self-defense devices. Licensing may be required for some security positions.

All workers need to have at least a high-school diploma for employment consideration. Additional training depends on the situation and may require some computer and communication skills' (writing and speaking) training outside of the workplace and/or some on-the-job training by the security companies that provide job placement for these employees or by the actual employers.

Lastly, this dual-function job has, in places of work, created a new look for security officers that is less harsh and more appropriate for individuals who promote the company's image and interact with the customers and the general public.

Do You Need Current Data On The Work Force?

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the Department of Labor (DOL) offer a 24-hour current data hotline. It lets you select from several recorded messages. The recordings include statistics from the Consumer and Producer Price Indexes, the Current Population (Employment) Survey, and the Employment Cost Index.

You can also learn about BLS publications and release dates for upcoming surveys. If you need to speak to a staff person during regular business hours, one option even gives you the phone numbers of subject specialists in the Bureau. The hotline is (202) 606-STAT.

The Department of Labor maintains an electronic bulletin board containing statistical, employment, safety and health, and pension information, as well as a nationwide listing of Federal job opportunities. The bulletin board also includes BLS news releases. Anyone with a computer, modem, and communications software can use the service. The bulletin board number is (202) 219-4784.

Source: Occupational Outlook Quarterly/Fall 1994

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"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"

Editors: Bernadette Mangie, Director, Education and Support Programs; John S. Goberish, Communications

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***For more information**, call 1-800-345-5443 or write to: PASSAGE, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.*

Interested In Highlighting Your Organization, Innovations, or Success Stories In PASSAGE?

In an effort to provide customized/updated educational, career-development, and job-search information to organizations and agencies throughout Pennsylvania, the PASSAGE newsletter was established to focus on this special interest. A 353 Project funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education and a companion publication to **What's The Buzz**, the first volume of issues was introduced in 1989.

To prepare each issue, the staff members of the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee, PASSAGE's sponsoring agency, utilize their collective background experiences in ABE/GED classroom instruction, job-search training, job placement, career-development programs, research, writing, and publication production. More importantly, the newsletter's success and growth depend on the contributions of a statewide network of representatives from educational/training programs and business professionals. The exchange of ideas and information is what personalizes PASSAGE and what keeps the staff up-to-date with successes and innovations that are occurring in classrooms and workplaces.

Perhaps, your organization would be interested in contributing an article that you feel would be of interest to students, job seekers, educators, counselors, and/or program directors.

Some of the subject areas featured in the publication include:

Success Stories - Inspirational students who have achieved educational/career-related goals

Workplace Trends - Job openings, the changing workplace, and educational requirements of occupations

Highlighting Career Fields - Jobs that are growing, employer expectations, and training requirements

Job-Search Strategies - Examples such as networking techniques or learning interviewing skills

Preparing Job-Search Materials - Tips for organizing resumes, cover letters, and follow-up information

Importance of Basic Skills in the Workplace - How communication skills, math, social sciences, and humanities can impact success on the job

Life-Long Education - Emphasizing the importance of expanding/updating your education and maintaining employability

If you are interested in submitting an article or would like more information call 1-800-345-5443 or write to PASSAGE, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027. ✍

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Volume 6
Issue 5

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January
1995

"Your Workplace and Job Skills Information Newsletter"

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The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no offical endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

Workplace Trends and Statistics

Three-Job Marriages

There is a growing trend that is becoming common in the workplace. Today, the two-earner family often evolves into the three job-marriage. A three-job marriage consists of a family where both spouses work, and one of the parents has two jobs.

In fact, according to a new Labor Department survey, seven million Americans (6 percent of the work force) currently occupy 15 million jobs. The survey indicates that most multiple-job holders are married, and the number of these workers is equally divided among men and women.

In addition, most individuals holding two jobs usually have a full-time and a part-time job or two part-time jobs. Research indicates that 40 percent of these job holders take extra work to pay bills and that 16 percent take this approach to gain experience in a new line of work.

Job Seekers: Stop Before You Pay!

The article "Job-Search Assistance...Choose Carefully", in the September 1994 issue of PASSAGE provided tips on how job seekers can avoid counseling and job-search agencies that do not have their best interests in mind. If you are seeking employment, make an effort to be aware of the organizations and the promotional efforts designed to exploit job seekers. More information on the various types of employment service organizations and how to select the appropriate assistance is available. For additional tips, the brochures "Job-Hunting: Should You Pay?" and "Job Ads, Job Scams, and 900 Numbers" are available by writing to the Public Reference, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20580.

Company Training Increases

A report by **Training** magazine states that U.S. businesses spent a record 50.6 billion (for approximately 4.7 million workers) on formal employee training in 1994. This was a five percent increase from 1993. The survey targeted 2,000 companies with 100 or more employees. Also, the survey indicated that the most popular areas of training at the present time are management and computer skills, followed by communications, supervisory skills, and technical skills. ✍

What Are Outplacement and Inplacement Services?

There is a continuing trend of companies trimming their work forces and becoming more efficient. This trend began in the 1980s, and two terms became commonplace in the day-to-day vocabulary of companies that have downsized, of businesses that find jobs for employees affected by downsizing, and of publications that highlight employment/labor-market issues. These two terms are outplacement and inplacement. In an effort to better understand the changing workplace, let's explore the meaning of each term.

Perhaps, you have heard of the term "outplacement"; it is the older and more common of the two terms. Outplacement is a service that companies provide to employees who have lost their jobs because of downsizing or who were fired. Outplacement services help these unemployed individuals with preparing their job-search materials (resume and cover letter), obtaining interviewing skills, learning job-hunting techniques, and finding employment at new places of work.

Outplacement services are provided by companies in an effort to:

- **help** ease the transition for both the unemployed workers and the remaining employees.
- **lessen** potential difficult situations for everyone involved in the transition.
- **protect** a company's public image.

However, with the trend of trimming the work force to cut costs, companies are finding that, after eliminating jobs, there is often a need to hire again. This can happen when a company eliminates too many workers or finds that a particular department needs more workers than anticipated.

To help prevent this from happening, many larger companies have used "inplacement" techniques. Inplacement is the process of training employees for new/different career opportunities within a company instead of simply dismissing a large number of employees. This switching of employees from one department or assignment to another, within the same company, became common in the 1980s. It is often called a "lateral move." These employees keep similar salaries but receive different duties.

Employees identify new career interests and work towards adapting to other jobs within their organization or a related branch of their company. In addition to the importance of being more flexible, skilled, and interchangeable, employees who know more about the business in general are highly valued.

The benefits of inplacement include:

- **retraining** valuable employees who have knowledge about and experience with the company and customers.
- **decreasing** the number of individuals affected by downsizing.
- **increasing** the motivational level of many employees.
- **cutting** the costs that typically occur when a company has to dismiss current employees or hire, recruit and train new employees.

Tip: *In an effort to prepare for this possibility, what steps can you take to expand your knowledge, accept new responsibilities, and make yourself a valuable employee?*

Some Views On Luck And Opportunity...

"Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity."
Elmer Letterman

"Success is simply a matter of luck. Ask any failure." **Anonymous**

"The only good luck many great men ever had was being born with the ability and determination to overcome bad luck."
Channing Pollock

"The harder you work the luckier you get." **Gary Player**

"Be grateful for luck, but don't depend on it." **Anonymous**

"The golden opportunity you are seeking is in yourself. It is not in your environment; it is not in luck or chance, or the help of others; it is in yourself alone." **Orison Swett Marden**

STUDENTaccesspage
Focus: Recording Your Achievements

Introduction

Do you keep track of your career and personal accomplishments/successes? Are you a self-evaluator? Are you truly aware of your skills and abilities?

Whether you are attending school, have a full-time job, and/or are involved in personal/community activities, you should take a few minutes at the end of each day to record your daily accomplishments. The information you record can be beneficial to you in many ways.

For example, your weekly achievement list can help you:

- **Prepare** your job-search materials (resume and cover letter) and assess your educational and work-related accomplishments.
- **Keep** track of the real-life examples you obtain from your various activities. These examples can be used effectively in an interview situation.
- **Improve** your employment security and work towards promotions by having a record of your successes and by updating your employer about these successes.
- **Chart** your growth professionally and personally and understand your strengths and weaknesses.
- **Organize** your current and future goals and objectives.
- **Put** yourself on the offensive and gain greater control of your career and personal development.

Guidelines

1. **List** all of your accomplishments--big or small.
2. **Complete** the exercise every day and make sure each day has at least one entry.
3. **Evaluate** your accomplishments/performance at the end of each week.
4. **Use** whatever tool is convenient or affordable to record your information. A notebook will work just as well as a computer for your weekly list.

Example #1 - School

Monday, February 6, 1995 – Prepared a five-minute speech on my view of the health-care situation in the U.S.

Tuesday, February 7, 1995 – Presented speech to class of 17 people. I did it!

Wednesday, February 8, 1995 – Finally...I am comfortable with multiplying fractions.

Thursday, February 9, 1995 – Dropped kids off at school, did household chores, and made it to school on time.

Friday, February 10, 1995 – Started brainstorming topics for next week's speech.

Weekly Evaluation – Balanced a busy schedule, gained a better understanding of math assignments, and overcame fear of public speaking. However, I plan to improve my eye contact and delivery.

Example #2 - Work

Monday, February 6, 1995 – Wrote article for monthly staff newsletter.

Tuesday, February 7, 1995 – Stayed late after work to help with Smith account.

Wednesday, February 8, 1995 – I'm starting to really improve my knowledge of Windows 3.1.

Thursday, February 9, 1995 – Stayed on track and remained organized despite busy schedule and distractions.

Friday, February 10, 1995 – Received thank-you note from XYZ Corporation's department manager.

Weekly Evaluation – All short-term goals were accomplished. I need to gain more knowledge of desktop publishing--start next week. Good job!

Example #3 - Personal/Community Activities

Monday, February 6, 1995 – Hosted cub-scout meeting.

Tuesday, February 7, 1995 – Balanced check book using computer.

Wednesday, February 8, 1995 – Stripped/refinished dresser cabinets.

Thursday, February 9, 1995 – Attended church council meeting.

Friday, February 10, 1995 – Attended CPR training course.

Weekly Evaluation – Completed all scheduled activities. Also, I think I would like to learn more about computer operations.

The Center For Innovative Training and Education: Preparing Individuals For Jobs In The Secretarial Field

PASSAGE recently interviewed Mary Mehler, Director of the Center For Innovative Training and Education (CITE), a division of Arbor, Inc., located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. CITE provides comprehensive education and training for individuals who wish to enter the secretarial field.

If you are interested in exploring career opportunities in the secretarial field, this interview granted by Mary Mehler provides valuable information on the skills needed to be successful and on how this field is affected by changes in technology and the labor market.

Mary, tell us about the Center for Innovative Training and Education and the services provided at the Center.

Ms. Mehler: The Center for Innovative Training and Education was established in 1968 and provides training for adults who wish to have careers as secretaries, word processors, clerks, typists, data-entry personnel, and administrative assistants. (Editors Note: The term "secretary" will be used to describe the many job positions that can be included in this career field.)

Our adult students include individuals who receive services from the Department of Public Assistance and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and some dislocated workers. Our mission is to provide training and job-placement assistance. All individuals who enter the program must meet set entry requirements and pass a screening process. Once admitted into the program, all training and job placement occurs within a one-year period. Currently, we have a 75% job placement rate, and an average of 225 individuals complete the program each year.

What elements make your program successful and unique?

Ms. Mehler: Our program is structured to model a typical workday, and students receive training from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., five days a week. This approach better prepares students for the daily routines and challenges that are present whenever they enter the work force. Each student receives special individualized instruction to meet his/her training needs. The instructors place a great emphasis on utilizing this personalized approach and on treating the students as individual learners. In addition, we have 64 computers available to the students, and the latest and most popular business software for IBM compatible computers is also available. This factor is important because technology is changing rapidly, and our staff and students need to stay up-to-date with the many constant changes that occur.

What prerequisites and skills are needed to enter the secretarial field?

Ms. Mehler: First, strong reading and writing skills and a professional manner are important. A high school/GED diploma is a definite plus; these basic skills serve as a solid foundation.

Next, a secretary needs to be proficient at typing. For an entrance test, most employers require secretaries to type at least 50 to 60 words a minute.

Computer skills are essential to obtaining employment. In fact, most typing is completed on a personal computer. At CITE, we believe an individual entering the secretarial field should be trained extensively in word processing. Currently, we teach WordPerfect because it is the most popular and most commonly used word-processing software with area employers. Program-manager software such as Microsoft Windows, spreadsheet programs such as Lotus, and various data-entry programs are also taught at the Center.

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With great importance being placed on communication skills, our students also receive training in Business English, writing, and public speaking. Secretaries are often responsible for writing letters and reports, conducting research, doing dictaphone transcription, answering the telephone, greeting the public, and presenting information to staff, clients, and managers.

Organizational skills are also a necessity. Secretaries may be required to file documents, route mail, deliver messages, and schedule activities and meetings for managers.

How has the field changed over the past ten years?

Ms. Mehler: In addition to the wide usage of computers, employers, in many cases, are giving secretaries more responsibilities and expanded duties. For example, secretaries are now responsible for some managerial duties which can include training incoming staff members, arranging/overseeing small seminars, and distributing information to staff members in a timely fashion. Also, secretaries should be ready to exercise their creative abilities when they are asked to write for managers or company publications, brainstorm ideas at meetings, and arrange schedules in a busy atmosphere.

What type of personality traits are needed for success in this career field?

Ms. Mehler: Secretaries need to enjoy working with people. This includes staff, customers, and the general public. In our program, the students get an opportunity to role play situations that occur in the workplace and to present speeches. With these activities, an emphasis is placed on being culturally literate (able to function in different work environments with all levels of employees who have diverse responsibilities and cultural backgrounds), presenting a professional image, and displaying confidence. A pleasant personality is definitely a plus in this field.

What is the average starting salary and work environment for individuals in this field?

Ms. Mehler: In the Philadelphia area, which is where most of our students receive job placement, the average starting salary is between $7.00 and $8.00 an hour. Most secretaries work in an office environment. The pay and responsibilities vary depending on the location and job description/responsibilities. The majority of the jobs tends to be during the weekday, and both full-time and part-time hours are available in this field.

Do you have any suggestions for individuals interested in the secretarial field?

Ms. Mehler: The secretarial field can be a challenge, and it is far from being an easy job. In fact, the job can be complex and, as stated earlier, can require many skills. If you are interested in this career field, visit someone who works as a secretary and spend some time on the job observing his/her daily activities. See if this type of work truly interests you. Ask yourself the following questions: "What are my skills and abilities?"; and "What specialized areas would be of interest to me as a secretary?" Examples may include working in a hospital as a medical secretary, with engineers as a technical secretary, or at a law office as a legal secretary. Do your research, find out if this field is right for you, and remember to keep updating your skills.

PASSAGE would like to thank Mary Mehler for her assistance in preparing this article. If you are interested in contacting the Center For Innovative Training and Education in Philadelphia, call (215) 922-6555.

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"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"

Editors: Bernadette Mangie, Director, Education and Support Programs; John S. Goberish, Communications

BCALMC Consultants: Richard Carland, Workforce Education Specialist; Alex Garcia, Executive Director; Alice Green, Technical Advisor; Judy Dzumba, Program Support Staff; and Lee Katroppa, GED Instructor.

For more information, call 1-800-345-5443 or write to: PASSAGE, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.

Work-Related Health and Safety Issues

Protect Your Hearing On The Job.

Did you know, according to national statistics, that eight million people in the United States are exposed to occupational noise so loud that their ears could be damaged through constant exposure? In addition, an estimated 2.7 million work with enough noise that hearing damage can occur in 15 minutes or less if the ears are unprotected.

According to the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), employers are legally responsible for providing a workplace free of such hazards as excessive noise. OSHA regulations require employers to limit workers' noise exposure to 90 decibels averaged over an eight-hour period. There are, however, shorter time limits for higher noise levels.

A decibel (dB) is the unit of measurement used for environmental noise. For example, a whisper is 30 dB, and normal conversation is 60 dB. A vacuum cleaner is 75 dB, and a lawn mover can produce 90 dB. Sound is noticeably and physically painful at about 132 dB. A jet engine can create 140 dB of noise. Hearing loss can be risked if you are regularly exposed to 100 dB or greater for more than a minute.

What is being done to protect individuals from ear damage? In addition, to ear protection (ear plugs), many proactive companies have instituted hearing conservation programs which include administering hearing tests on a regular basis and insulated work areas that decrease noise. Also, OSHA strongly suggests that individuals who work in an environment that generates high decibels should rest their ears outside of work and create some quiet time every day.

Ergonomic Hazards In The Workplace

According to data collected from America's factories and offices by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 60 percent of all workplace injuries are due to what is called "cumulative trauma disorders", which are a result of jobs that require repetitive motion. The most common disorders associated with repetitive motion are lower-back pain, eyestrain, and the highly publicized computer-era ailment carpal tunnel syndrome.

How To Exercise Your Creativity

In a study of 424 runners, nearly 60 percent reported feeling more creative while running. What's more, they were able to develop ideas or unusual solutions to problems spontaneously. Many of the runners even kept a pencil and notebook in their lockers so they could write down their ideas after their workouts.

But running isn't the only activity that may boost creativity. Researchers at the Baruch College of the City University of New York also found that students who participated in aerobic fitness and dance classes were able to think of more uses for an ordinary object, such as a pencil, than students who didn't do aerobic exercise.

If your mental power needs a boost, a regular fitness program may be the creative and healthy answer.

The Cost of Stress

Research from the United Nations estimates that stress and job burn-out cost Americans more than $200 billion each year. *To help alleviate stress, the researchers suggest the following tips:*

- **Allow** yourself at least 10 minutes of quiet time each day. Give yourself time to unwind, relax, and collect your thoughts.
- **Record** what is bothering you on a piece of paper. The action of putting your difficulties or problems in written form helps relieve pressure. (Be sure to keep this information private; it is for your benefit only!)
- **Exercise** several times a week.
- **Establish** a healthy diet and get enough rest (seven to eight hours).
- **Organize** yourself at work and at home. Establish a system that works for you and stick with it. Set goals and duties that are realistic and productive. Eliminate unneeded clutter and activities.

1995 PASSAGE Reader Survey

Introduction

Each year the editors of PASSAGE prepare a reader survey. This annual survey has provided the staff with a valuable external evaluation tool which is extremely beneficial to the newsletter's development.

For example, this survey will help the PASSAGE staff better understand what information and subject areas are beneficial to our readership, how your organization uses the newsletter, how the newsletter can better suit your educational/career-related needs, and what changes/trends are occurring in the workplace and classroom.

Please complete the following survey (the deadline is March 3, 1995) and mail a copy of your responses to: PASSAGE Newsletter, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, Pennsylvania 15027. Also, you can contact the PASSAGE staff at 1-800-345-5443 (PA Toll Free).

Please check the appropriate job title or classification which best describes you.

____ Student

____ Adult-Basic Education Instructor

____ Volunteer Tutor

____ Job Trainer/Developer

____ Career Counselor

____ Program Director

____ Librarian

____ Other ______________________________

Optional

Name: ______________________________

Organization: ______________________________

Address: ______________________________

____

Telephone: ______________________________

Is PASSAGE mailed directly to you? Yes ____ No ____

Do you give PASSAGE to someone else to read? Yes ____ No ____

If so, who do you give PASSAGE to and why? Would you like to add his/her name to the PASSAGE mailing list?

____

____

How do you use the PASSAGE newsletter?

____ Supplemental Academic Materials

____ Career/Job-Search Resource

____ Networking Tool

____ Staff-Development Training

____ Personal/Career-Related Development

____ Informational Update (exploring job trends, identifying changes in today's workplace, or expanding program network)

____ Other ______________________________

Please check all of the subject areas that are of interest to you or your organization.

1. ____ Employer-employee expectations: on-the-job requirements and how to prepare, meet, and exceed the needs of the employer

2. ____ Classroom skills that are utilized in the workplace: public speaking, math, and writing

3. ____ Success stories which highlight the triumphs of adult learners who have improved their situations by furthering their education and by starting rewarding careers

4. ____ Job-search strategies: preparing job-search materials and using interviewing techniques

5. ____ Highlighting career fields: educational requirements, experience, and job duties

6. ____ Highlighting successful programs and services available across the Commonwealth

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7. ____ Counseling: Concerns of adult learners who continue their education and prepare to enter the work force

8. ____ Technology and who it affects in today's/tomorrow's workplaces

9. ____ Labor-market trends: growing/declining occupations and the skills needed for success

10. ____ Special needs of adult learners: additional services that help them achieve their goals

Provide an example of how PASSAGE was helpful to you.

Please evaluate the following areas of the PASSAGE newsletter.

Content (topics presented in PASSAGE)

____ Excellent ____ Good ____ Fair ____ Poor

Readability (writing style/reading level)

____ Excellent ____ Good ____ Fair ____ Poor

Design (layout and general appearance)

____ Excellent ____ Good ____ Fair ____ Poor

Utility (useful to your particular needs)

____ Excellent ____ Good ____ Fair ____ Poor

Additional comments on PASSAGE's content, design, readability, and utility:

Let us know about your special programs, services, and student-success stories. Check the following selections that may be of interest to you.

- ____ I would like to write an article for PASSAGE.
- ____ I have resources that may be of interest to PASSAGE's readers.
- ____ I have a student-success story that could be highlighted in PASSAGE.
- ____ I am sponsoring a workshop or training session that could be of interest to adult instructors or learners involved in educational and career-related programs.

If you are interested in contributing to the newsletter, make sure you have included your name, address, and telephone number.

Do you have any additional suggestions that would help us improve the newsletter? ✎

Thank you for your time and assistance!

passage

BCALMC
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Conway, PA
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Jan. 1995

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Volume 6
Issue 6

passage

February
1997

Your Workplace and Job Skills Information Newsletter

Special Job-Search Issue

(Part One)

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The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

How Has The Resume Changed Over The Past Ten Years?

Many factors have affected the content and design of a modern resume. While the most basic elements of a resume remain the same, downsizing, increased competition, and technology have made the art of resume writing more of a challenge. The job seeker should be aware of the standards, techniques, and strategies that are being used by today's successful job seekers (your competition) when designing resumes.

So, what has changed over the past ten years?

1. Equipment/Technology - In the past, unless you made use of your local print shop (which was quite expensive), most resumes were prepared on a standard typewriter or word processor. Slightly more than ten years ago, computers were just starting to be used in all types of work environments and in the home.

Make no mistake; the typewritten resume can be professional and adequate. However, it cannot match the quality of a resume that is prepared with a computer word-processing program and printed on a laser printer or a deskjet printer.

These tools...the computer, word-processing software, and the printer...when used properly, help create a superior marketing tool that allows the writer to have more design flexibility and create a resume that is easy to read and is more attractive to the reader (bolding, italics, bullet statements, adjusting text size, denser printer quality, etc.--see page seven).

Depending on your situation or point of view, these changes have made the typewritten resume less influential and eye catching when compared to a resume formatted on a computer.

Tip: Perhaps, you are thinking, "Great...I don't even have my own computer." Don't worry.

Continued on page 2

Continued from page one

With a little effort, you should be able to locate an educational or a job-development program in your community that has a computer and can help you format your resume. Also, ask friends and family. With the impact that computers have made in the home market, there is a good chance you know somebody that has computer equipment. The quality of your resume will be worth the effort.

2. Greater Emphasis on Accomplishments - Today, employers want to see what you have accomplished on previous jobs and in your educational training. Employers are expecting resumes to have short detailed statements that provide examples of how you met/exceeded set goals, found better ways of completing a task, increased sales or quality, or saved the company money. Before...resumes were somewhat more general and just listed daily job duties such as "Responsible for typing documents" or "Responsible for telemarketing sales." Today, the same examples might read, "Type 60 words per minute with an accuracy rate of 95%", "Grossed $100,000 in sales during my first year of employment," or "Learned new computer software, reorganized the office-filing systems, and increased efficiency for staff and customers."

This information can be included in several sections of your resume. For example, you could design a special section near the beginning of your resume entitled "Professional Accomplishments" or "Career-Related Accomplishments." Also, this information can be included in the Job Description section of a resume. Whatever approach you choose, be certain that your accomplishments are in your resume. Don't underestimate what you have accomplished. Think of your day-to-day job duties and career-related efforts and remind yourself how you have grown and improved as an employee and a student.

3. Eliminating Personal Information - Ten years ago, sections that highlighted special interests or personal information were commonly found in most resumes. The information that was listed in this section may have included hobbies, community activities, or athletic accomplishments. While this information might show your personal side, it really does little to sell your abilities to the potential employer.

Examples of exceptions might include listing personal physical-fitness activities for a job that requires fit and healthy individuals, community activities that might complement your leadership skills, or a hobby that is job related. This information could be listed under a section entitled "Job-Related Activities" or "Extra-Curricular Activities." So, unless the information relates, in some way, to the position you are targeting, you should avoid listing personal information.

4. Placing More Focus On A Particular Career - In addition to highlighting specific accomplishments, the resume itself should be geared to one particular job or career field. The first step in this process is to redesign the Job Objective.

Once upon a time, Job Objectives started every resume and read something like this..."Seeking a challenging full-time position that utilizes my current education and experience with opportunities for advancement." What does this really tell the employer? Not much. If you are truly interested in obtaining employment and being successful at what you do, the employer would expect you, and all serious candidates, to have these interests and qualities. This information is understood.

The Job Objective, which can also be called the Profile, Summary, Career Objective, or Capabilities, should also be highly specific and can include information such as the job and type of company you are targeting, accomplishments, educational background, work-related experience, specific career goals, and job-specific skills. (Some resumes, because the work experience is focused on one career and is highly detailed,

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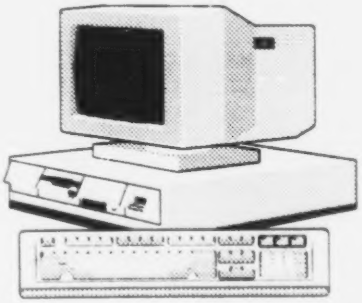
eliminate this section altogether and start the resume with work history information.)

Remember, resumes that are not job specific and are too general usually do not get the employer's attention. In fact, some job candidates, depending on their interests and background, may have several versions of their resume. For instance, if you have a background in communications, one resume may place great emphasis on your public-relation skills while another may focus on your radio-production skills. Let the resume tell the employer exactly what job you are seeking and let the employer see detailed job-related evidence that you are a qualified job candidate.

5. Always Include A Cover Letter - Employers have always preferred that the resume is sent with a cover letter. At one time, employers would let typical job candidates slide if they did not include a cover letter. However, in a time when the number of available/qualified job candidates has increased, you must be certain that you are marketing yourself in the best possible manner and that you are fulfilling all of the requirements of an effective job search.

The cover letter adds a personal touch that lets the employer know who you are and why you should be seriously considered for the position. Mention your accomplishments/skills, what you know about the company, and that you will contact them for an interview. The key here is personalization; do not send a generic cover letter that can be used for any job opening. The cover letter is an effective tool that can work to your advantage and help you get recognized. If you are mailing a resume, the cover letter is automatically part of the package. Always include it with your resume.



6. Greater Variety Of Formats - Professionals who help individuals with career development are experts at creating resume formats that particularly emphasize their job candidates' skills and abilities. These efforts, along with a competitive job market, have made resume writing a more flexible/creative process that actually better serves the job candidate. The structure and approach to organizing information are not as rigid.

This can mean combining formats such as reverse chronological (emphasizing experience/education and moving from the present to the past) and functional (emphasizing qualifications, abilities, and strengths over specific work history) and changing the order of the information as it appears on the resume. The bottom line is that each individual has different strengths and abilities. One job seeker may want to emphasize educational training, while another may decide that he/she should place an emphasis on his/her impressive history in volunteer-work activities.

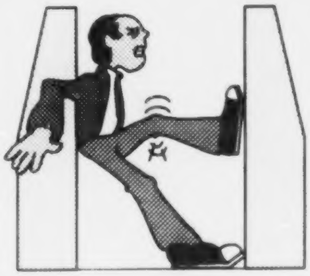
As long as you can convince the employer that you are a more than capable candidate, you have the creative freedom to organize, title, and design the various categories within your resume.

Resume Essentials: What Hasn't Changed

Despite the fact that time, technology, and economic factors have changed the resume in many ways, there is some basic information that should always be included in every resume...

- ☐ Your name, address, and telephone number
- ☐ Educational History
- ☐ Work-Related History
- ☐ Work-Related Extracurricular Activities/Professional Organizations
- ☐ Certificates, Awards, and Honors
- ☐ Military Service
- ☐ Job Objective, Career Goal, or Accomplishments (Formatted and titled to suit your specific situation).

On-The-Job Survival Tip



Previous issues of PASSAGE have highlighted tips which can help you stay employed (learning new skills and networking). To add to this expanding list, we are including some practical advice from Richard Conklin, managing director of Drake Beam Morin Inc., an outplacement firm based in Cleveland.

Mr. Conklin suggests that employees who survive in today's workplace learn how to "manage their managers." No...this does not mean learning how to take advantage of your employer. Mr. Conklin suggests that an employee should examine his/her employer's job, responsibilities, and long and short-term goals. With an understanding of your employer's concerns, you can work to help him or her achieve success.

The Result of Your Efforts: The employer's confidence in you, the need for your participation in a variety of day-to-day responsibilities, and your importance to the company will increase. In a work environment that is focused on efficiency and productivity, this approach will improve your employment security.

Keep in mind that although statistics indicate that the massive layoffs which have occurred over the past ten years are beginning to slow, companies are now smaller and more cost effective. Companies have experienced great change and have gone through the process of downsizing. These factors have affected the way employers think and operate. They are not afraid to eliminate an unproductive department or worker.

Adapted from the article "Resolve To Do What You Can To Keep Your Job", Mary Ethridge, Knight-Ridder Newspapers.

Ten Major Obstacles To Success

1. Complacency
2. Fear Of Failure
3. Fear Of Success
4. Inability To Let Go
5. Lack of Clear Goals
6. Putting Things Off
7. Shyness
8. Inability To Look At Yourself Honestly
9. Taking The Easy Way Out
10. Arrogance

Source: USA Today

Did You Know...

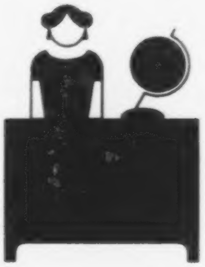
The Chinese character for "danger" also means "opportunity." What can you do to make the best of a difficult situation with school or work? Are your hopes and dreams being put on hold because you are not comfortable taking chances and stepping outside of your comfort zone?

What Are The Most Effective Job-Search Methods?

Informal - 63%
Networking with personal contacts and direct contact with employers

Want Ads - 14%
Newspaper and on-line computer networks

Employment Agencies - 12%
Both public and private agencies



Other - 11%
Civil Service tests, job fairs, school-placement offices, etc.

Source: A study conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor

Focus: Getting Past The Screen

You are sure that you are the best candidate for the job, and you have sent your resume in a timely fashion. Unfortunately, every time you try to call the employer to see if your resume has arrived safely and to set up an interview, the secretary answers the phone and says something like this..."She's not available at the present time. May I have your name and number, and I'll be sure that she gets the message."

Don't worry. This is a common situation for all job seekers, and don't get too angry at the secretary. She is just doing her job. This individual is responsible for screening calls from unwanted sales people, business associates, and yes...job seekers.

The reality is that employers are busy people and often need their calls carefully screened. If they didn't screen their calls, they would probably lose hours of valuable time getting sidetracked every day.

So, how do you get past the screen? There are two interesting approaches which you can try. First, when you call during regular business hours and the secretary answers the phone, mention that you would like to speak with the employer. (Please have the employer's name in advance of the call--it should be the same person who received your resume). If you are asked about the nature of the call, explain that it is concerning business correspondence that you had sent last week (your resume) and that the employer (insert name) is anticipating your telephone call. (You mentioned in your cover letter that you would call him/her.)

This cannot be considered lying; the information you have provided is all true. With this approach, the screener may understand that you are making an important business call the employer was expecting. This sounds more interesting and less common than telling the secretary..."I'm calling about the job opening and would like to know if I can get an interview."

A second approach would be to call the employer before or after working hours...in the early morning, in the evening, or during the weekend. Often employers like to visit the office during off hours to catch-up on work or to avoid the normal daily distractions. These off hours are a great time to reach the employer. In fact, the chances are great that he or she may even answer the phone.

If you do get past the screen, make sure that:

> You are polite and brief.

> You mention that you have sent a resume.

> You remind the potential employer of the position you are targeting.

> You ask if the employer had a chance to review your resume.

> You quickly mention your skills and qualifications.

> You ask for an opportunity to receive a personal interview.

Some Views On Excellence...

"Every job is a self-portrait of the person who did it. Autograph your work with excellence." **Anonymous**

"The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor." **Vincent T. Lombardi**

"Desire is the key to motivation, but it's the determination and commitment to an unrelenting pursuit of your goal--a commitment to excellence--that will enable you to attain the success you seek." **Mario Andretti**

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit." **Anonymous**

"No one ever attains very eminent success by simply doing what is required of him; it is the amount and excellence of what is over and above the required that determines the greatness of ultimate distinction." **Charles Kendall Adams**

Using Computer Software To Format Your Resume

Computer word-processing software can offer you a variety of design tools/options which can make your resume stand out from the rest of the pack. However, at the same time, this wide variety of unique tools and design choices can also clutter your resume and work against you. The best approach is to know the purpose of each design tool and to use (or not use) these tools to create an organized and neat document.

Most, if not all, popular word-processing software programs offer very similar design options which can change the size, look, placement, and readability of words, sentences, paragraphs, and titles. (Refer to the resume example on page seven to better understand each design tool.) *Here are some of the most common design tools and tips on how to use each:*

Bolding - Bolding is used to darken text. It gives text the look of authority and draws the attention of the reader. Bolding is commonly used for titles, headings, subheadings, and important words and phrases. Use this tool wisely. A page with too much bolding will be hard to read and will not let key elements stand apart from the rest of the text.

Italicizing - Italicizing, which tilts the text slightly to the right, is also used for added emphasis of words and sentences. It is often used for captions, titles, and important words or phrases. As with bolding, italicizing should be used sparingly to let certain important segments receive attention.

Underlining and Double Underlining - As a standard feature on typewriters, underlining and double underlining were used to help emphasize lines of text and titles. However, with the wide usage and availability of computers, bolding and italicizing are more commonly used. If possible, because of readability, use bolding and italicizing instead of underlining. In addition, if you use underlining, use it only when needed.

Adjustable Font Size - Most current word-processing packages and printers enable the user to change the size of the text and the style (typeface). This creates a great deal of flexibility for the user. Keep in mind that the text size should relate to the message and to the format/style of document that is being created. For example, a resume would not use the same text sizes as a magazine advertisement. As a general rule, avoid using more that two different sizes/typefaces on a page (e.g., all paragraph text should be one size/style, all titles should be one size/style, etc.).

Adjusting Space - This tool is helpful for fitting and customizing information on a page. Spacing can be changed between words, lines, paragraphs, and titles. Used wisely, this can create a document that is easier to read and less crowded. Make sure that your resume has breathing space (white space), or nothing on the page will catch the eye of the interviewer.

Margins - A Margin is the space that borders the outside of a page. This can be easily adjusted in all word-processing programs. A margin of one inch is common for most resumes. In addition, do not reduce the margin space below one-half of an inch if you are in need of fitting more text onto a single page. Remember, white space makes the document more reader friendly.

Continued on page seven

passage

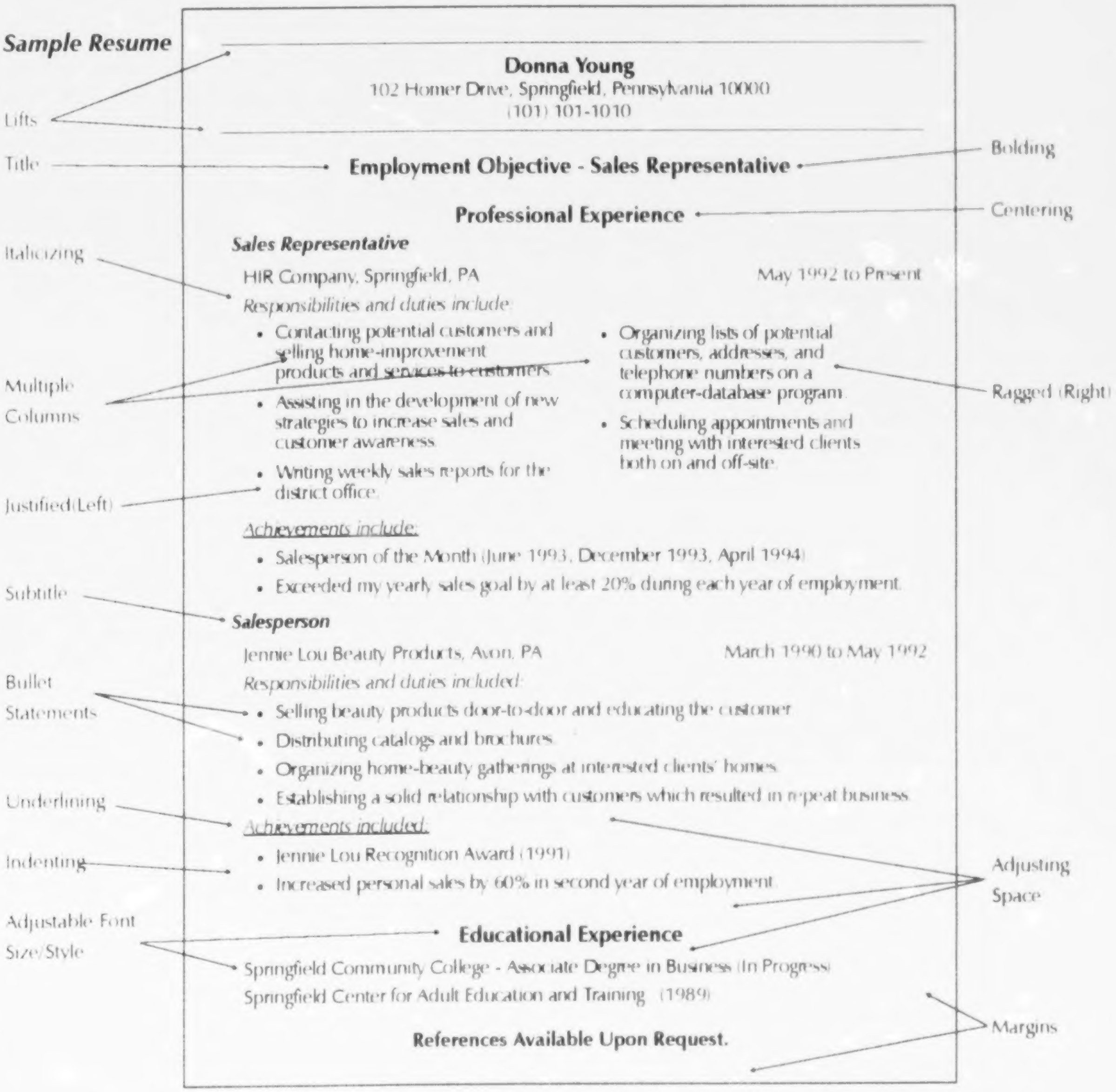
"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"

Editors: Bernadette Mangie, Director, Education and Support Programs; John S. Goberish, Communications

BCALMC Consultants: Richard Carland, Workforce Education Specialist; Alex Garcia, Executive Director; Alice Green, Technical Advisor; Judy Dzumba, Program Support Staff; and Lee Katroppa, GED Instructor.

For more information, call 1-800-345-5443 or write to: PASSAGE, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.

Sample Resume



Donna Young
102 Homer Drive, Springfield, Pennsylvania 10000
(101) 101-1010

Employment Objective - Sales Representative

Professional Experience

Sales Representative

HIR Company, Springfield, PA — May 1992 to Present

Responsibilities and duties include:

- Contacting potential customers and selling home-improvement products and services to customers.
- Assisting in the development of new strategies to increase sales and customer awareness.
- Writing weekly sales reports for the district office.
- Organizing lists of potential customers, addresses, and telephone numbers on a computer-database program.
- Scheduling appointments and meeting with interested clients both on and off-site.

Achievements include:

- Salesperson of the Month (June 1993, December 1993, April 1994)
- Exceeded my yearly sales goal by at least 20% during each year of employment.

Salesperson

Jennie Lou Beauty Products, Avon, PA — March 1990 to May 1992

Responsibilities and duties included:

- Selling beauty products door-to-door and educating the customer
- Distributing catalogs and brochures.
- Organizing home-beauty gatherings at interested clients' homes.
- Establishing a solid relationship with customers which resulted in repeat business.

Achievements included:

- Jennie Lou Recognition Award (1991)
- Increased personal sales by 60% in second year of employment.

Educational Experience

Springfield Community College - Associate Degree in Business (In Progress)
Springfield Center for Adult Education and Training (1989)

References Available Upon Request.

Continued from page six

Right and Left Justified - Text on a page can be programmed to be even (flush) with the left-hand column, right-hand column, or both. Flush left (aligned) and ragged right (not aligned) are the most common and readable choices for the layout of paragraphs of text. Paragraphs which are flush right or have both sides aligned are more difficult to read.

Bullet Statements - This tool, or symbol, helps users organize lists of important information. It is used when a collection of information is of equal importance and needs to be highlighted outside of the normal paragraph format.

Centering - To help important lines of text stand out, centering is used for placing one or two lines of a title in the center portion of a page. Avoid centering blocks of text, titles, or subtitles that are three or more lines in length. This arrangement can become difficult to read and has no place in a resume format.

Indenting - This tool creates space and separation by aligning certain blocks of text and moving them inward. Indents call attention to paragraphs, quotations, and organized lists.

Multiple columns - The page you are reading consists of three columns. More and more word-processing packages allow the user to create from one to at

Continued on page eight

Continued from page seven

least four columns on a page. This can be useful for designing newsletters, brochures, and charts. However, resumes usually consist of only one column with the occasional inclusion of two or three columns for listing text or bullet statements.

Rules - Rules are lines that run vertically and separate columns of text. Rules are not commonly used in the layout of a resume.

Text Boxes - Text boxes are used to isolate information and are often used in newsletters, newspapers, and magazine advertisements. Also, text boxes are not commonly used in the layout of a resume.

Lifts/Pull-Quotes - Lifts/pull-quotes are horizontal rules that are used to draw attention to a block of text in a title or paragraph. Different than rules, lifts/pull-quotes can be used very sparingly in a resume.

Graphics - Some word-processing packages enable the operator to combine text and graphics on the same page. Unfortunately, graphics have no place in a standard resume.

Useful Resources

Here are some publications that can help you better understand how to write and design a resume. (Be sure to pay close attention to any sample resumes that are given in these publications; they contain a great deal of valuable examples that you can use for ideas when designing your own resume.)

Job Search Guide, Strategies for Professionals, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration

The No Pain Resume Workbook, Hiyaguha Cohen, Business One Irwin

How To Write Better Resumes, Adele Lewis, Barron's Educational Series, Inc.

The Perfect Resume, Tom Jackson, Doubleday

Ready, Aim, Hired: Developing Your Brand Name Resume, Allan Carson, Business One Irwin

Looking Good In Print, Roger C. Parker, Ventana Press (Although this book does not cover the topic of resume writing, it is a great resource for learning the basics of layout and design.) ✍

Have You Returned Your PASSAGE Survey?

Check your January 1995 issue of PASSAGE (pages seven and eight) for the Annual Reader Survey. As an important external evaluation tool, this survey has proven to be extremely beneficial to the newsletter's development and to meeting the needs of the readers.

The deadline for completion of the survey is March 6, 1995. Thanks for your cooperation!

Surveys can be sent to PASSAGE, 400 Ninth St., Suite A, Conway, PA 15027. If you would prefer to complete the survey by telephone, the PASSAGE staff can be reached at 1-800-345-5443--PA Toll Free. ✍

passage

BCALMC
400 Ninth St.
Suite A
Conway, PA
15027

Feb. 1995

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CONWAY, PA
PERMIT NO. 24

Volume 6
Issue 7

passage

March
1995

Your Workplace and Job Skills Information Newsletter

Special Job-Search Issue
(Part Two)

- > Transform Your Cover Letter Into A Unique Marketing Tool
  - Basic Ingredients
  - Going Beyond The Standard Cover Letter
  - Obtaining Employer Info
  - The Different Types of Cover Letters
- > Sample Cover Letter (Page Four)
- > Persuasive Writing (Page Four)
- > *STUDENTaccesspage* Focus: Cover-Letter Worksheet (Page Five)
- > On The Job: Making The Best Of A Difficult Situation (Page Six)
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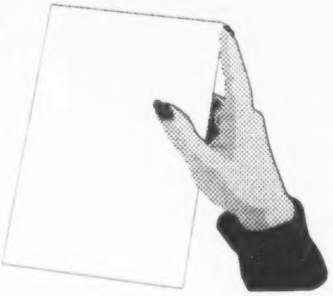
The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

Transform Your Cover Letter Into A Unique Marketing Tool



As you may or may not realize, the cover letter can be an extremely effective job-search tool. Unfortunately, most job seekers prepare the same basic cover letter for every job opening and fail to use the simple marketing techniques that are available to them.

A cover letter, which contains the appropriate information and is well written, can help you get the attention of the employer and secure an interview. This article provides you with helpful guidelines that will enable you to transform a standard cover letter into a unique marketing tool.

Purpose

If you are mailing a resume to a potential employer, the cover letter should always be included as part of the job-search package--no exceptions. The purpose of the cover letter is to:

- **Let** the employer know what job opening or employment opportunity you are pursuing. (In some cases, job seekers send a letter and resume to an employer who may not currently have a job opening. They use the cover letter as an opportunity to introduce themselves to the employer. Hopefully, in the future, they will be considered when an opportunity becomes available.)
- **Highlight** your skills/abilities and how they will benefit the company. Make it brief. (The information in the cover letter should not be an exact copy of the information in your resume.)
- **Provide** a more personalized introduction of your abilities that complements the information included in your resume. (While the cover letter is not a place for humor or clever comments, be sure to let the content of the letter reflect your positive qualities and enthusiasm.)

Continued on page two

Continued from page one

- **Create** enough interest in your resume to obtain an interview. After reading your cover letter, the employer should be interested in learning more about you.
- **Request** the opportunity to meet the employer in person and to discuss your abilities in greater detail.

Basic Ingredients

The following guidelines should always be followed when preparing the standard cover letter:

- **Make** certain that your cover letter consists of an introduction/opening (explain why you are writing and mention the position you are seeking), a main body (highlight skills, experience, education, accomplishments, and any knowledge you have about the employer), and a conclusion (ask for an interview and mention that you will be calling in several days).
- **Address** the letter to the individual who will be reviewing your job-search materials. (Be sure to find out who would be the best person to receive this information and who schedules personal interviews.) The letter should include an inside address (the employer's address) and a salutation.
- **Be sure** to have at least one other person proofread your materials. Proofreading includes checking for correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation. (Most computer word-processing software has the capability to check for spelling errors.) Always double check the spelling and accuracy of names and titles.
- **Type** all cover letters on quality 8 1/2" X 11" paper. Avoid flashy colored paper. White, light gray, and ivory are acceptable paper colors. For a professional look and balance, your resume and cover letter should be printed on the same paper.
- **Make** certain that the letter is customized and prepared specifically for each company/job you target. (Generic letters that could have been written for any company/job will give the employer the impression that you are lazy and unprepared.)
- **Be sure** to include your name, address, and telephone number on the cover letter.
- **Limit** the cover letter to one page. Keep the letter short and to the point. Avoid writing long sentences and paragraphs.

Please review the cover letter sample on page four.

Going Beyond The Standard Cover Letter

Now that we have highlighted the basics of cover-letter writing, let's look at what approaches you can use to make your letter stand out and get the interest of an employer. As you begin the writing process, always keep in mind that your cover letter should go beyond being just a personal introduction and summary of your work/educational experiences.

How do you accomplish this? First, you need to include information that shows what results you have produced on the job or in a training situation. In addition, these results or accomplishments need to be measurable. Examples of this type of information can include awards, performance recognition, training accomplishments, management responsibilities, or highlighting your expertise in a certain activity or function. This information should be included in the body of your cover letter.

For example, in a cover letter that is written specifically for a sales position, you might state... "During my first year of employment with Alon Beauty Products, I developed a marketing plan which quickly expanded my customer base and the demand for the product in my region. In fact, upon completion of my first year of employment, I had the third highest sales record in my region." This example provides the employer with specific information and shows that you have produced measurable results.

Continued on page three

Continued from page two

Give the employer a solid idea of what you have accomplished and how this directly relates to the job opening you are targeting.

Next, show that you have done some research on the company and have solid reasons why you want to work for that company. Your knowledge of the company and motivation for wanting to work for that company are of great importance to the potential employer. This information should also be included in the body of your cover letter.

Expanding upon the previous example, your cover letter might state, "I am most interested in your New Tech line of beauty-aid products and quite impressed with your reputation for excellence in customer service." This example shows you have made some effort towards learning more about the company; therefore, you have a better chance of getting the employer's attention. Remember, most job seekers fail to make this extra effort. Eventually, your hard work and preparation will be noticed and rewarded.

How Do You Obtain Information About the Employer?

Obtaining this information does not necessarily have to be a difficult process. A simple approach would be to call the company and ask for the public-relations, customer-service, marketing, or advertising department. When you contact one of these departments, let a company representative know that you are interested in applying for a position and that you would like to know more about the company. Questions you might include:

- **Can** you tell me about the company's history?
- **What** new products or services are being offered by the company?
- **What** makes this company unique from the competition?
- **What** new innovations have recently occurred at the company?

Other sources of information may include friends or acquaintances who work at the company, newspaper articles featuring companies that are of interest to you, libraries, and many other sources (see pages seven and eight).

The Different Types of Cover Letters

While the purpose of every cover letter remains the same, the information you include in the introduction of the letter will vary. In addition to including your interest in a particular job opening or why you would like to explore employment opportunities, the information you place in your introduction should let the employer know how you found out about the job opening and/or the company.

The different situations that may create a job lead or a chance for future opportunities include:

- **Responding** to a newspaper advertisement.
- **Using** the name of a person in your job-search network (family, friend, coworker, or acquaintance) who referred you to the employer.
- **Sending** an unsolicited letter to a company that employs individuals in your field of interest.
- **Preparing** an informational letter for individuals in your network who can help spread the word about your abilities and let you know about any relevant job opportunities.

Whenever possible, include the name of the individual who referred you to the job opening. Employers are more likely to take a greater interest in a job candidate who was referred by a respected coworker or acquaintance.

Make certain that your cover letter reveals how both sides (the employer and you) can benefit professionally. An employer will not be impressed by a resume that only states how the company can help you and improve your situation. This needs to be a two-way process.

Use the cover letter sample on page four and the worksheet on page five for guidance when preparing a cover letter! ✍

Sample Cover Letter

Josephine Newtz
523 Metropolitan Lane, Millville, PA 19999
(543) 767-7676

April 15, 1995

Mr. Frederick Fredmont
Director of Human Resources
Zumba Corporation
1212 South Avenue
Carmel, PA 19996

Dear Mr. Fredmont:

In a recent conversation with Sal Jones, Sales Manager at Zumba Corporation, I was informed of the Secretarial/Office Assistant position that has recently become available in your company's sales department. Based on my knowledge of Zumba Corporation, current skills, and education, I feel that I have the background needed to be a successful member of your organization's sales department.

At my current position with Carlang Inc., I am responsible for utilizing computer software such as WordPerfect 6.0, Quicken, and FoxPro to prepare written correspondence, organize customer information, and prepare invoices. During the past year, I have completed my six-month goal of reorganizing and improving the management system for all customer/staff records and computer files. In addition, I recently had the opportunity to train five staff members on WordPerfect 6.0 for Windows.

I am impressed with the participative atmosphere that is promoted at the Zumba Corporation and with the importance that is placed on education and sharing knowledge/responsibility among all levels of staff in the company.

For your review, I have enclosed a copy of my resume. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you in person and discuss my qualifications in greater detail. I will call you early next week to set up an appointment.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Josephine Newtz

Josephine Newtz

Enclosure

Date

Inside Address

Salutation

Introduction

Body

Conclusion

Signature

Your Personal Information

Highlights job opening and how information was obtained.

Mentions skills/abilities and measurable results.

Shows your interest and knowledge of the company.

Mentions your interest in obtaining interview and thanks employer.

States that resume is enclosed and signals the end of the letter.

Persuasive Writing

The National Center for Education Statistics has recently reported that even the best students have trouble with persuasive writing. (The type of approach a writer would use in preparing a cover letter or a resume--supplying evidence of one's abilities and convincing the reader to consider a potential opportunity or concept based on the presentation and organization of words and ideas.)

Also, a government study found that fewer than 20 percent of students can make a strong case in writing for whatever they are trying to sell...even when what they're trying to sell is themselves.

The Bottom-Line: Work hard to develop and expand your writing abilities. Even the best writers admit that preparing written information is never easy, but anyone who makes an effort can be successful. Well written job-search materials can help you rise above the competition. ✍

STUDENTaccesspage Focus: Cover-Letter Worksheet

Use this exercise as a guideline for preparing cover letters. Your responses to each question or statement in the exercise can serve as an outline or a checklist which can be used for preparing the final draft of each cover letter you write to an employer. Make a photocopy of this exercise each time you need to organize a cover letter.

Cover-Letter Worksheet

Contact Information--Be sure to include the following at the beginning of each letter:

____ Your Name, Address, and Telephone Number

____ Date The Letter Was Sent

____ The Employer's Name, Title, and Address

____

____

____

____ Salutation (Dear Mr. or Dear Ms.)

Introduction/Opening

1. How did you find out about the job opening or company?

____ Friend or acquaintance

____ Newspaper Advertisement

____ Unsolicited response or researched company in your career field

2. What job opening are you applying for?

____

3. If someone referred you to the job opening, include his/her name in the introduction. When appropriate, also include this individual's title and employer.

____

Main Body

1. What current job-related skills and abilities do you have that relate directly to this position?

____

____

____

2. What educational training do you have that relates directly to this position?

____

____

____

3. List an example of how you met a goal or produced positive results. (Examples can include awards, performance recognition, training accomplishments, management responsibilities, or highlighting your expertise in a certain activity or function.)

____

____

____

4. List evidence that shows you have conducted research and are knowledgeable about the company, its history, and/or new innovations. (Be sure to show how your abilities/interests can relate to the employer's needs.)

____

____

____

Conclusion--Don't forget to include:

_____ A reference which states that your resume is enclosed. (This line can also be included in the introduction or the body.)

_____ A sentence which states your interest in scheduling an interview in the near future.

_____ A sentence that lets the employer know you will be contacting him/her to schedule an interview.

_____ A sentence to thank the employer for his/her time and consideration.

_____ Your signature.

_____ The word "Enclosure" at the end of your letter.

***Last Reminder** - Always proofread each letter before placing it in the mail. Check for accuracy of information, grammar, punctuation, and correct spellings (especially the name/title of the employer).*

On The Job: Making The Best Of A Difficult Situation

By Maria DeSantangelo,
Adult-Education Outreach Specialist,
Non-Traditional Student Instructor,
and Former Business Owner

Two years ago I accepted a newly created position at a well-known restaurant. At the time of my interview, the job responsibilities were not clearly defined. However, I needed immediate employment--so I accepted the job.

Within the first two weeks, I quickly realized why the job was created. Basically, nobody wanted the position.

For the first two months, my daily routine was somewhat confusing, and I had little direction. At times, I had to decide for myself what tasks needed to be completed and how to prioritize these tasks. While I was allowed to come and go as I pleased, I was held accountable if something wasn't completed on time.

When I started this job, I was held accountable for just about everything except washing dishes, cooking, and serving the food. I answered the telephone, disposed of the trash, cleaned bathrooms, took inventory, washed windows, filed, conducted business transactions at the bank and the post office, talked to vendors, and worked harder than I had ever worked in my life. (And I've been in the work force for 25 years!) Oh, did I mention that I was earning $5.00 an hour and I have a four-year college degree?

At the time, circumstances were such that I really needed a job and could not be too choosy about my employment options. Even though I really felt I was being exploited, I have always believed that every job experience can be valuable; this job was really challenging that belief. So, I decided to set some personal guidelines for myself:

- **Do not dwell** on the bad aspects of the job.
- **Find** success and fulfillment by being productive.
- **Examine** my situation/attitude and realize that I am the only one responsible for my actions.

Now, I had a new approach, but everything about this job seemed wrong. (This new approach was really going to take some effort on my part.) I had a difficult time finding anything that was positive. Then, it occurred to me that I was working with a great bunch of people who I really liked, and many of the customers were among the most interesting people I have ever met. This made the job more enjoyable.

The next mental obstacle I had to overcome was the fact that I could find no satisfaction in bussing tables and emptying the trash. Was I being a snob? Finally, I reminded myself that I clear the table and take out the garbage at home; it's no big deal and necessary work.

At this point, I realized that my attitude was my main problem. I recognized a great deal of what I thought was bad about the job was simply my own perception. I knew even the best jobs have a downside. No job is perfect, and if I was stuck with this job, I had to make the very best of the situation.

Slowly, my attitude started to change. I began to realize people were asking me for my opinions and even taking some of my advice! Also, I convinced myself that this job was an opportunity to prove to myself just how versatile I can be as a worker. Soon, my boss recognized I was somewhat of a role model and a good worker, and he increased my salary. As my productivity and self esteem improved, my boss continued to give me more responsibility. I no longer had to clear the tables and take out the trash because I was becoming too valuable in the office.

After two years, I turned what once was a "nothing job" into a position I was proud to have. When I resigned, my boss asked me to stay, but I was ready to experience new opportunities. Today, I am working at several challenging jobs, and I am satisfied to know I did a good job at the restaurant. In addition, I had the opportunity to meet many wonderful people, gain experience for my resume, and enrich my personal and professional life. What I liked best was that three coworkers applied for the new position I had created at the restaurant!

Helpful Publications For Researching Career Fields and The Job Market

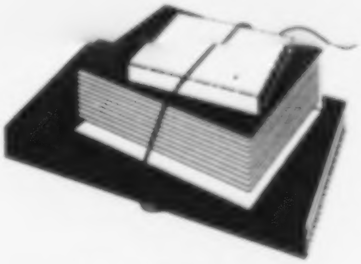
The following list of publications (both government and private) can be found at area libraries, job centers, career-development programs, or directly from the agency or publisher. The information is useful for obtaining data on careers, education, industries, employment outlooks, growth trends, relocation, salaries, populations, unemployment rates, and the costs of living.

If you are a new job seeker or are reentering the job market, these resources can be of great benefit to you in your job search and in obtaining employment:

Occupational Outlook Handbook - Lists hundreds of jobs and provides information on employment outlooks, working conditions, duties, qualifications, and job growth potentials. Publisher: U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics

Occupational Outlook Quarterly - Provides trends and outlooks for different sectors of the economy and individual occupations. Also features selected job areas that show potential for growth or that are innovative/unique. Publisher: U.S. Department of Labor

Projections 2000 - Includes projections of the U.S. economy and labor force. The information is highly detailed. Publisher: The Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics



State and Metropolitan Area Data Book - Lists statistical data from many public and private agencies and includes unemployment rates, rate of employment growth, and population growth for every state. It also highlights data on employment and income for metropolitan areas across the country. Publisher: U.S. Department of Commerce

White-Collar Pay: Private Goods-Producing Industries - Features salary information for a variety of white collar jobs. Publisher: U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics

AMS Office, Professional and Data Processing Salaries Report - Highlights salary distributions for 40 different occupations. The information is subdivided by company size, type of business, region of the country, and 41 different metropolitan areas. Publisher: Administrative Management Society, Washington, D.C.

American Salaries and Wages Survey - Includes detailed information on salaries and wages for thousands of jobs. The information is organized by geographic location. Cost-of-living for various areas, total numbers of individuals employed in each occupation, and projected job trends and changes are also given. Publisher: Gale Research, Detroit, MI

American Almanac of Jobs and Salaries - Lists information on wages for specific occupations and career fields. Trends in employment and wages are also listed. Publisher: Avon Books, NY

Once you have decided on a particular occupation, industry, and geographical area, you need to find a company that could employ individuals with your interests. There are a variety of publications that list information about employers which is beneficial to job seekers. The highlighted information lists companies by industry, location, size, product/service, and contact people. Also, the lists include addresses and telephone numbers.

Continued on page eight

passage

"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"

Editors: Bernadette Mangie, Director, Education and Support Programs; John S. Goberish, Communications

BCALMC Consultants: Richard Carland, Workforce Education Specialist; Alex Garcia, Executive Director; Alice Green, Technical Advisor; Judy Dzumba, Program Support Staff; and Lee Katroppa, GED Instructor.

For more information, call 1-800-345-5443 or write to: PASSAGE, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.

Continued from page seven

Here is a sample of various publications that provide employer information:

The Job Bank Series (Bob Adams Inc., Holbrook, MA)

The Job Hunter's Guide to 100 Great American Cities (Brattle Communications, Latham, NY)

Macrae's State Industrial Directories (New York, NY)

National Business Telephone Directory (Gale Research, Detroit, MI)

Thomas Register (New York, NY)

America's Fastest Growing Employers (Bob Adams Inc., Holbrook, MA)

The Hidden Job Market: A Guide To America's 2000 Little-Known Fastest Growing High-Tech Companies (Peterson's Guides, Princeton, NJ)

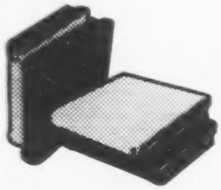
Standard and Poor's Register of Corporations, Directors, and Executives (New York, NY)

In addition to these publications, professional and trade associations can help you identify areas of job growth, information on companies, and specific career-related information. Some publications that list these associations are:

Encyclopedia of Associations - Lists 22,000 professional, trade, and other non-profit organizations in the United States. Publisher: Gale Research, Detroit, MI

Career Guide To Professional Associations - Lists more than 2,500 professional associations and is geared to the job seeker. Publisher: Garrett Park Press, Garrett Park, MD

For additional information, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics prints various publications and collects national and local employment statistics and wage information. For more information, contact the regional office in Philadelphia at (215) 596-1154. ✍



*Adapted from the **Job Search Guide: Strategies for Professionals** U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration.*

The Value of Career Information

The more career information you get, the better off you'll be. A recent issue of the **Monthly Labor Review**, published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, reports that nearly three-fourths of working adults surveyed said that if they could start over again, they would try to get more information about their career options. *According to the National Career Development Association and the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee:*

- One-third of the survey respondents had planned their careers.
- One-third started their careers by chance or took the only job available.
- One-fourth were influenced by friends, parents, or counselors.
- The rest got jobs through a career counselor or public job-service program.

Source: Occupational Outlook Quarterly, Winter 1994/1995 ✍

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March 1995

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Volume 6
Issue 8

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April
1995

Your Workplace and Job Skills Information Newsletter

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Mastering The Job Interview

After you have successfully accessed your skills and abilities, targeted a career field, established a job-search network, and prepared an impressive resume/cover letter, your many efforts and persistence will provide you with opportunities to prove yourself in the job interview. Everything you have worked for leads to this point. Are you prepared? Can you convince the employer that you are the best person for the job?

With practice and preparation, you will be able to present your positive attributes in a relaxed manner and with confidence. Here are some valuable guidelines that will help you impress the interviewer and eventually secure employment:

- **Know** yourself. This statement seems simple enough; however, when most job seekers are asked for the first time, "Tell me about yourself", they usually get uncomfortable and have difficulty structuring their answers to fit the job openings. Knowing yourself means being able to explain what you have accomplished in school and/or on your last job, describe your strongest skills/qualities, provide examples which support your statements, and show that you have what it takes to be successful and meet the employer's expectations.
- **Practice** answering interview questions. Be prepared to answer questions such as:
    - Why do you want to work for our company?
    - Why are you the best candidate for the job?
    - What are your greatest strengths/weaknesses?
    - Can you tell me about your past accomplishments?
    - What are your career goals?
    - Why did you leave your last job?
- **Prepare** solid answers that highlight your strengths. Remember...everyone has some type of weakness. Stay positive and focus on your

Continued on page two

"Mastering The Job Interview" Continued From Page One

greatest attributes. For example, if you do not have a great deal of work experience, concentrate on highlighting any volunteer activities and educational-related experiences that are relevant to the job opening. Have faith in your abilities and learn how to sell your best qualities.

- **Research** the company. Just as your cover letter should reveal that you have made an effort to learn about the company, you also need to prove to the employer that you have some knowledge of the company. Know something about the company's history, products/services, business philosophy, and competition. Take this information and use it during the interview (i.e., "My research has shown that your company values customer satisfaction..."). This extra and important step can help set you apart from the competition and will help the employer to view you as a serious candidate.
- **Maintain** a professional appearance. This includes wearing conservative business clothing (suit or dress outfit) and being well groomed. Avoid flashy clothing and jewelry.
- **Know** your body language. Give a firm handshake when greeting the employer, maintain proper posture during the interview, be sure to smile, and maintain eye contact when you are being asked or are answering questions. (Try not to look down or to the side when you are answering or considering a response to a question. This nonverbal message gives the employer the impression that you have something to hide or you are not being truthful.)
- **Answer** questions thoroughly. Again, give examples from your work/school history to support your statements. At the same time, try not to ramble. Give direct answers to questions. This process becomes easier with practice.
- **Expect** moments of silence. When an interviewer pauses to think and there is silence, many job seekers become nervous and feel they have to say something in this situation. If you have effectively answered the last question, wait patiently and attentively for what the interviewer has to say next. Relax; you don't have to say something every time there is a moment of "dead air."
- **Be** a good listener. Understand that the interview is a two-way communication process. Listen closely to what the employer has to say and respond appropriately when he or she has finished a particular question or statement. Creating a natural balance is important. This is an educational process for both the interviewer and the potential employee.
- **Use** powerful action verbs. When you explain your skills/abilities and provide examples, use words that enhance your statements and create a positive impact. Some examples of powerful action verbs you might use include...supervised, initiated, improved, saved, designed, prioritized, generated, developed, organized, exceeded, completed, motivated, etc.
- **Ask** questions at the end of the interview. This will show your interest in the position and your initiative. A good question to ask might be..."What are the results you expect to achieve from this position?" Also, you may want to ask, "When can I expect to hear from you about this position?" Be sure that you have effectively presented all of your skills, experiences, and qualities to the employer. Use this time to summarize your abilities and to make certain that the employer has all the information he or she needs to make a decision.
- **Remain** optimistic at all times. Stay positive before, during, and after the interview. This approach will eventually get you the results you expect. Negativity will not move you closer to your goal. Despite all of your preparation and background, your overall attitude will have the greatest effect on the employer. ✍

STUDENTaccesspage
Focus: Developing Your Job-Search Network

"Yeah, I read the classified advertisements everyday...especially Sunday, and I call the local Job Center every couple of weeks. But for some reason, I'm having great difficulty even getting an interview. I really don't know what else to do. There must not be any jobs available."

These are typical comments made by many of today's job seekers. Why do job seekers fall into this trap or rut? Their reasons vary and include:

- Not being aware of the effectiveness of other methods such as networking. (Reminder: Two-thirds of all jobs are secured by communicating with personal contacts.)
- Not being able to admit to other people that they are currently unemployed. This is not the picture of success they want others to see.
- Not being comfortable with communicating to individuals on a personal level. Networking techniques require constant contact with people.

What Is A Network?

A network consists of "all the people you know." These individuals do not have to be close friends; they can even include people you have met only once or twice. (You don't really have to know their names.) In a job search, networking is basically "getting the word out" to helpful contacts (network) about your need for assistance and input. It involves using the telephone, personal contact, and receiving leads and referrals.

Here are some valuable tips that you can follow when preparing and using your job-search network:

- **Let** everyone know that you are seeking new employment opportunities. Don't be ashamed. In today's economy, it is common to be in between jobs. People will relate and sympathize with your situation. They understand that help is often needed.
- **Realize** that you can't do everything yourself. With your preparation and hard work, many people will be more than happy to help you.
- **Introduce** yourself to people; don't wait for someone to start the process.
- **Understand** that networking enables you to obtain information that is not advertised to the public. Remember...most jobs are not advertised. Your network can let you know about job openings before the general public gets the word. What would you prefer...being the only resume on the employer's desk or one of several hundred resumes that arrives after a job is advertised in the local paper?
- **Know** that this approach enables you to communicate on a more personal level. You become more than just a piece of paper. A positive referral from a friend or acquaintance will get the employer's attention and will help you stand out from other candidates. Employers value positive referrals from coworkers, associates, and various individuals they know and respect. This makes their jobs easier and enables them to screen applicants.
- **Change** your normal routine. This doesn't mean that you should ignore people in your current circle of contacts. It does mean that you should creatively expand your network and search for new possibilities. Find ways of meeting new people. For example, volunteer for an agency that will enable you to network with people who have some knowledge/connections that can move you closer to your goal.
- **Understand** that networking will feel awkward at first. It is not always an easy process to begin, but your confidence and methods will improve quickly with practice. Basically, the worst thing that can happen is that someone will say "no", and the best outcome is securing employment in less time.
- **Look** everywhere for networking opportunities. Every person you meet can be important to obtaining new information or contacts.
- **Know** that developing a network takes time. Relationships, contacts, and trust have to be built or renewed.

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Understanding The Needs of Today's Employers: Trends and New Standards

You Have Ninety Days...

New employees usually have an average of 90 days to prove themselves. Accountemps, a national temporary staffing company, asked 150 executives how many weeks it takes to know whether a new hire is successful. The answer was an average of 12 weeks.

Max Messmer, the chairman of Accountemps, has some advice for those early days of employment...

- Arrive on time.
- Be friendly and courteous.
- Don't confide personal information to new co-workers.
- Work hard.

In addition, Andrea Price, president of the Colorado Human Resource Association, states, "The key to increasing security on a new job lies in mimicking approved workplace behaviors."

Hiring-Decision Standards

In a survey conducted for the U.S. Department of Education, 3,173 plant managers were asked what qualities/abilities they look for when hiring new employees. Of the 11 standards considered important to hiring decisions, attitude and communication skills were at the top of the list.

Survey Lists Employers' Priorities

The New York-based management consulting firm, Towers Perrin Company, interviewed 300 executives from medium and large-sized organizations. One of the many questions employers were asked in this survey was, "What are your main business priorities as an employer?"

The top three priorities listed by employers were:

1. Customer Satisfaction
2. Financial Performance
3. Competition

To Fax or Not To Fax?

Many job seekers ask if faxing a resume to an employer is acceptable. In most cases, the answer would be no.

Unless the employer would like to see your resume immediately and has requested that you fax a copy, you should always mail an original copy of your resume. The quality of fax copies is average at best and may not present you in the best light. Also, most employers do not like their fax machines to be used or even partially dedicated to the purpose of receiving dozens of resumes each day.

If you decide to send your resume by fax, be sure to include a type written cover letter/fax cover sheet. Then, be sure to place an original copy of your resume and cover letter in the mail.

When Is The Right Time To Ask For A Raise?

You're probably right in thinking you deserve a bigger paycheck. However, before you point out to your supervisor that it's time you got a raise, stop and ask yourself this question: "Is this really the right time?

Look at the company. Is the company hiring contractors and temporary workers rather than full-time, permanent staffers? Are the permanent staff members who were recently hired less experienced (and lower paid) than those hired in the past? How was the company's financial performance this year compared to previous years? In other words, is the company biting the bullet?

Be careful not to make yourself more expensive than your company can currently afford. Check out the bonus plan first or find out if compensations such as extra vacation time are available.

Source: The Effective Executive, September 1994

Understanding The Needs of Today's Employers: Trends and New Standards

What Should I Call My Boss?

Dave Morand, a professor of management at Pennsylvania State University, conducted a two-year study which concludes that bosses and workers have better working relationships and establish better working atmospheres when they call each other by their first names. He found first names are much more common in the workplace today than they were 20 years ago. (As a rule of thumb...if an employer uses your first name when addressing you, it is acceptable for you to address that individual by his/her first name. However, if you are uncertain that a first name is appropriate, stick with Mr., Ms., or Mrs.)

How Will Your Workplace And Job Change In The Next Five Years?

Recently, 400 human resource executives were surveyed by the American Society for Training and Development about trends in business, technology, and training for the next five years. Their responses might reveal what's in store for you and your colleagues and employers for the rest of the decade.

Business Trends - The global marketplace is anticipated to have the greatest influence on changing jobs and business. Preparing products and services for an international customer base will require many changes, including reengineering (changing the mode of operations) many processes--even entire companies in some cases. In addition, employees will have to take more responsibility for adjusting their present work styles and for learning new job-related skills.

Leadership by teams will become more common and there will be less distinction between employees and managers in terms of authority, status, and role. The chief leadership issues will be designing organizations to cope with new business climates and managing change.

Lastly, companies will rely more on temporary and contract workers to perform certain jobs.

Technology Trends - The creation of the "information superhighway" will significantly affect most workplaces. Digital electronics, optical data storage, and more powerful computers will change the way information is created, stored, and shared. More workers will become computer empowered--and those without computer literacy will fall behind. Some companies will even open up their information base to customers and suppliers, allowing for quicker interaction and problem-solving. The need for immense mainframe computers is diminishing, and the use of desktop computers and portable networks will continue to increase.

Training Trends - Workforce training will continue its shift from professional trainers to nontrainers, such as managers, team leaders, and technical workers. Self-directed learning and team learning will increase. Workers both on the job and those receiving training can expect a greater use of technology. Fortunately, most respondents expect this technology to be more portable and more user-friendly. Companies large and small will increase their reliance on community colleges for training support.

Cultural Issues - Companies will devote more effort to becoming aware of cultural differences and to incorporating diverse values into their practices, products, and services. As the workplace changes, workers must also be prepared to change. In a fast-paced world, flexibility and a willingness to learn are crucial assets.

Source: Nine To Five, September 19, 1994, Dartnell, 4660 N., Ravenswood Ave., Chicago, IL 60640-4595.

"STUDENTaccesspage" Continued From Page Three

- **Be** aware that networking is a give and take process. If you are asking for assistance, you need to be caring and responsible enough to help others when they encounter difficulties. Your assistance will not only benefit others...it will reinforce your credibility.
- **Keep** in touch with people in your network. Remaining in contact with these individuals on a regular basis is important during your job search as well as after you have secured employment. You never know when you may need to use the network again.

Getting Ready...

Be sure you are ready to conduct a job search before you begin to ask for assistance. Being prepared and organized will improve your opportunities for achieving successful results.

Before you start networking for job-related information, consider the follow suggestions:

- **Know** what career you are targeting. You will have difficulty helping yourself and receiving help from others if you are not focused.
- **Make** certain that you have the proper education and/or experience to be successful in your chosen career field.
- **Have** a resume or summary available to give to people in your network. Provide people with the tools they need to help you.
- **Set** goals. Break this process down into small steps. You should know how many people you want to contact this week and this month, and you should know what your goals are six months, one year, and five years from now.
- **Believe** in yourself.

Getting Started...

To begin the process of networking, use the following exercise as a starting point:

1. **Identify** people in your network. Get a notebook and list the names of: 10 family members; 10 friends; 10 acquaintances; 10 coworkers (past or present); 10 business contacts/associates (customers, service providers, salesman, etc.); 10 people from your volunteer work experience (if you do not already volunteer--start today); 5 people you know from school; 5 people from local businesses you frequent (grocery store, gas station, department store, etc.); 15 people from social/religious functions (your child's sport activities, clubs, personal hobbies, a party at a friend's house, etc.), and 2 doctors.

Don't get frustrated. In time, your list will grow. Give yourself several days to create a basic list, and you can add new names as you remember potential contacts. The magic of this process is that each person you contact has his/her own network of people who can be contacted. Do you begin to see how this can grow and expand?

2. **Prepare** what you are going to say to people before you contact them. Be aware of what you have in common with each person in your network (job-related, hobbies, beliefs, etc.). Use this information to begin the conservation. Once you are comfortable and have established a natural dialogue, use the last half of the conversation to request assistance. Explain that you are seeking new employment opportunities, mention the specific career field you are targeting, describe your skills and abilities, and ask your contact if he/she can be of assistance in generating employer information and potential job leads. If the individual cannot help you at the present time, ask if he/she can recommend someone who can help and if you can use your contact's name as a referral.

3. **Keep** records of who you have contacted and who you intend to contact. Make notes of your discussions with people. Keep track of any action steps that need to be taken. Follow through on everything that you promise to complete (e.g., making a phone call or attending an interview).

4. **Communicate** (telephone or in person) with people in your network at least once a month. If you are close to certain people, the number of times you contact these people will be greater. You will have to judge for yourself if you are taking up too much of an individual's time. However, be persistent and always update the people in your network about your progress.

5. **Talk** to at least three people each day. Networking is a constant process.

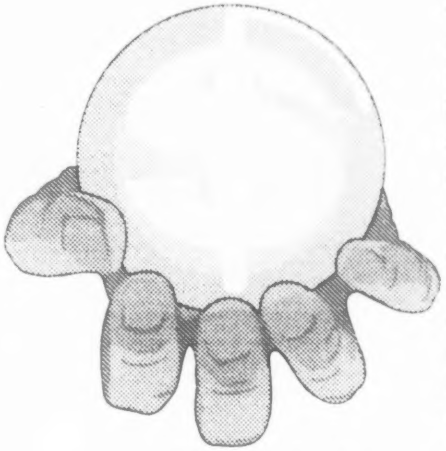
6. **Be** friendly to everyone. You never know who will provide you with some much-needed assistance in the future.

Expanding And Declining Careers For The Next Ten Years

The Detroit Free Press recently compiled a list of America's Hot Jobs through the year 2005. The finding reveals that education and skills are directly linked with better pay. In addition, research indicates that careers associated with hospitals, schools, and law firms are growing, while farm and factory related jobs are declining on a regular basis.

The following career fields can be considered America's hottest jobs and require educational training beyond high school:

- **Systems analysts**--This field involves using computers to analyze and solve business and scientific problems. The job is high-paying and is expected to create 501,000 jobs by 2005.
- **Special-Education Teachers**--A total of 267,000 new jobs are expected for this career field in the next ten years.
- **Human-Service Workers**--These jobs for social agencies and health departments will grow with 256,000 new jobs by 2005.
- **Computer Scientists and Engineers**--These high-paying occupations will grow with 236,000 new jobs in the next ten years.



These careers are considered high-growth areas because they will grow by large numbers of jobs. Also, they will have more openings in coming years from brand-new jobs than from positions created by replacement jobs (people who retire or move to other jobs).

Other high-growth areas on the list that require educational training include: management of people in complex workplaces; members of traditional professions such as doctors, lawyers, and engineers; teaching a new wave of children expected in schools; and nursing jobs to care for the aging baby-boom generation.

In addition, the list includes five high-paying career fields that do not require degrees to get started. These jobs include truck drivers, corrections officers, auto mechanics, insurance adjusters, and entertainment workers. While these jobs provide good pay, keep in mind, even in these fields, better skills mean better pay, expanded responsibilities, and increased opportunities for growth and promotion

Lower-paying occupations that will experience growth include sales workers, cashiers, office clerks, waiters and waitresses, food preparers, counter workers, receptionists, and cooks. While pay is low, many of these positions can lead to better opportunities when an individual obtains experience and training.

While many career fields will be experiencing growth, there will be some that will see job losses during the next ten years. In the past, people with little education or few skills could earn a middle-class living in factories or other blue-collar jobs. Unfortunately, these opportunities continue to dwindle in the new workplace.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the areas predicted to have the most job loses by 2005 include:

- Farmers and farm workers who will be affected by mechanization and corporate farming.

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"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"

Editors: Bernadette Mangie, Director, Education and Support Programs; John S. Goberish, Communications

BCALMC Consultants: Richard Carland, Workforce Education Specialist; Alex Garcia, Executive Director; Alice Green, Technical Advisor; Judy Dzumba, Program Support Staff; Carmie Felice, Outreach Specialist; and Lee Katroppa, GED Instructor.

For more information, call 1-800-345-5443 or write to: PASSAGE, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.

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- Private baby-sitters and maids will lose positions to day-care centers and professional house cleaners.
- Data processors and typists will be affected by office automation.
- Bartenders and butchers will be affected by America's changing habits.
- Telephone industry jobs such as repairing, installing, and running telephone systems, and operating switchboards/office phones will be affected by new phone designs and automated services that are being utilized.
- Jobs in textiles, lumber, electronics assembly, and general manufacturing will be affected by foreign competition/cheaper overseas labor.

Most new openings in these dwindling career fields will be for replacement workers who will fill the positions of individuals who have retired or who move to another opportunity.

So, how could you interpret this information?

The statistics reflect many trends and realities that are occurring in the workplace and reveal what career fields are safer and offer more potential opportunities than others. Some predictions may happen and some may not. However, if you have a passion for a particular career, you may want to concentrate all of your training and job-search efforts into making that opportunity happen. Doing what you truly love to do is what creates job satisfaction. Research all of the facts/forecasted trends, use your best judgment, and focus on long-term success and happiness.

Sources: Detroit Free Press and Bureau of Labor Statistics ✍

What Will Be Your Future Work-Life Expectancy?

Interested in knowing when you will retire? Well, the Chicago firm, Vocational Economics Inc. has developed work-life expectancy tables which may provide you with some insight on the future of your work life.

Work-life expectancy is the total number of years people can be expected to work, excluding maternity leave, child rearing, and other periods of unemployment.

For example, Vocational Economics Inc. projects that 40-year old women have, on average, just 17 more years of work ahead of them, while 40-year old men will have 21.1 years of work ahead of them. Findings also indicate that people with more education work longer, and healthy 20-year old men with less than 12 years of education have an average work-life expectancy of 32.4 years, seven years less than those with 16 or more years of schooling. ✍

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April 1995

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Volume 6
Issue 9

passage

May
1995

"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"

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- Questions To Ask When Proof Reading Your Resume (Page Five)
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What Is ISO 9000 Certification?

Perhaps you have read about ISO 9000 Certification when you were scanning the business section of a newspaper, or maybe you have heard of it from a friend who works at a local manufacturing company. As a job seeker and as a member of tomorrow's workforce, you may benefit from having a better understanding of ISO 9000 Certification and its impact on businesses, customers, and quality.

The following information, which was highlighted in a recent issue of ***Sales and Marketing****, provides a solid introduction to understanding the importance of ISO 9000 Certification:*

The latest way for a company to demonstrate its commitment to quality is through ISO 9000 Certification (International Organization for Standardization). The European Community was the first to employ this quality standardization framework (a system for monitoring and ensuring that all products meet set standards of quality) with the aim of ensuring that its 12 members followed uniform quality procedures. Within the past five years, ISO 9000 has quickly become a badge of honor for companies and a competitive tool for marketing.

When a company applies for ISO 9000 certification, a third party auditor examines its quality procedures. If the company meets standards, it becomes registered as an organization that has met all the requirements for ISO 9000 certification. (Obtaining certification is a process that can take several months or years. It requires all workers to be more accountable and to know all aspects of their jobs.) When a company obtains the certification, it usually advertises its new status in hopes of gaining more business.

Besides providing a competitive edge, ISO 9000 may also be advantageous in obtaining contracts with governments. Some governments now cite ISO 9000 as a requirement or necessity for awarding contracts. Also, some companies striving to meet ISO 9000 standards are reducing operating costs by ten percent. For these firms, ISO 9000 is a vehicle for cost savings and quality improvement.

Similar to the U.S. government's blue seal of approval on meat products, ISO 9000 certification is likely to become something that customers automatically look for in the future.

Seven Reasons Why You Should Improve Your Writing Skills

Were you ever assigned a book report and waited until the last minute to complete it? Do you ever find yourself procrastinating and staring at the wall when you sit down to write that letter to a distant friend or relative? Does the basic idea of writing make you uncomfortable?

Well, if you feel this way, you are definitely not alone. However, even though writing/composition courses rank fairly high as the most hated area of study among students (along with math and public speaking), you cannot dismiss the fact that writing skills are extremely important and necessary.

Writing skills can affect many aspects of your professional and personal life. Realize that the process of developing your writing skills is more than just a series of uncomfortable classroom exercises. The skills you learn in the classroom will have many applications in the real world.

"Hey, I just wasn't born with the talent to write." Sorry...that excuse is not good enough. With practice and patience, anyone can develop solid and effective writing skills. You don't have to be William Shakespeare, Edgar Allen Poe, F. Scott Fitzgerald, or even Steven King to be an effective writer and to get your message across to your audience...the reader.

Let's look at seven ways writing can impact your future and the reasons why you should improve this valuable skill.

1. The process of writing requires that you utilize various methods (brainstorming and outlining) for assembling information into organized patterns (main topic, sub-topics, supporting ideas). It provides structure and organization. This skill/thought process will help you when you need to prioritize tasks, schedule activities, and collect/organize your thoughts.
2. Solid writing skills are important in the workplace. One would expect that secretaries, teachers, journalists, and public-relations' representatives need to have excellent communication skills...especially writing. However, many factors have created the need for more of today's workers to utilize this skill on a regular basis. With trends such as downsizing and the wide usage of computers and modems, employees are finding that they need to expand their skill base and accept new responsibilities. Today, it is common to see managers preparing their own reports and memos. In a trim and efficient economy, you may not have the luxury of having a secretary, and you may be responsible for communicating with supervisors, coworkers, and business associates in various written formats.
3. Your job-search campaign can greatly benefit from your ability to prepare custom-made/well-crafted written materials. Examples include the resume, the cover letter, and follow-up correspondence (thank-you letter). If your written job-search materials are designed to market your abilities/skills in the best possible manner, to focus on the specific skills an employer values, and to be attractive and easy to read, you will separate yourself from competitors who send generic resumes and cover letters.
4. Certain skills such as writing can improve your employability security and can enhance the potential for advancement at a company or in your career. Employers value employees who have developed their communication skills and have used these skills to

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"Seven Reasons"...Continued From Page Two

improve/expand their contributions to the company. If your team at work is asked to prepare a written assignment, volunteer to write the report. Ask if you can write an article for the company's in-house newsletter (if the organization happens to produce one). Effective use of your writing skills can help you stand apart from the rest of your fellow coworkers.

5. If you decide at some point in your worklife to change careers, writing is a basic skill that can transfer to many jobs and occupations. Once again, this skill can provide you with an edge over an individual who has a similar background as you but is not confident in his/her communication skills. In some situations, forward-thinking employees have used a variety of different skills including communications to create new and custom-designed positions within their companies.
6. After you receive your high-school/GED diploma, you may be interested in obtaining some type of vocational or college-level training. If you will be continuing your education, the importance of establishing and utilizing your writing skills is even greater at this educational level. Many college-level courses require students to prepare written reports and to complete essay tests.
7. Many of the same skills, methods, and thought processes used when preparing and completing a written assignment are used when organizing a speech. Similarities include exploring creative possibilities by using brainstorming techniques; assembling basic ideas with an outline; choosing the main topic, sub-topics, and supporting ideas/examples; preparing a rough draft or working copy; and finalizing the end product by reworking several drafts. With practice and preparation, the similarities become more apparent.

Now you are aware of why it is important to develop your writing skills. So, what is the next step?

Getting Started

1. **Read, Read, Read.** Learn from the professionals (and maybe even from the "not-so-professionals") . Newspapers, magazines, and books can provide you with many examples of different writing styles, sentence/paragraph structures, word choices, methods for conveying a message, etc. A wealth of examples is at your fingertips.
2. **Write a journal.** Keep a record of your daily activities...personal and/or professional. Try not to worry too much about your spelling/grammar. The main purpose of a journal is to get your ideas on paper and to learn how to structure your ideas. When you get more comfortable with the process, you can begin to concentrate more attention on spelling and grammar. Try to write at least one paragraph a day.
3. **Write letters.** Practice your skills once a week by writing a letter to a friend or relative. It's still cheaper than making a phone call, and you get to refine your skills.
4. **Outline your schedule.** Use an outline form to list your weekly work-related, educational, and personal activities. Arrange the information by prioritizing important responsibilities and by the times/dates when certain tasks need completed.
5. **Attend writing classes.** Your local colleges offer a variety of writing courses throughout the year. These courses will help you improve all aspects of your writing, and you will be able to get feedback from your instructor and fellow students as you continue to develop your writing skills.

"Unless you are able to communicate, to master the basic skills of speaking and writing in a forceful, polite, effective way, the day is going to come when being a nuclear physicist or an envelope maker or whatever it is you've learned to be won't be enough." ***--Harvey Mackay***

Exploring Careers: Working Outdoors

Many people prefer careers that enable them to spend some, or all, of their workday hours in the great outdoors. For the outdoor enthusiast, a vast selection of occupations is available. Examples include agriculture, biological sciences, construction, engineering, conservation, and recreation. These jobs can be found in the city, in rural areas, and on the water.

The education or training required for occupations in which workers dedicate part or all of their time outdoors varies. If you are interested in exploring outdoor careers, this listing can serve as a starting point for obtaining an overall idea of how many occupations actually involve working outdoors (full and part time) and the educational training needed to secure employment in each occupation.

High-School/GED Diploma usually necessary or recommended:

- Amusement Park Worker
- Animal Breeder
- Animal Trainer
- Beekeeper
- Billboard Erector
- Bricklayer, Stonemason, Marble Setter, Tile Setter, Or Terrazzo Worker
- Caddy
- Campground Caretaker
- Carpenter
- Cement Mason
- Charter Boat Operator
- Commercial Fisher
- Electric Sign Repairer
- Farm Worker

- Fish And Game Warden
- Gardener
- Groundskeeper
- Golf Range Attendant
- Guard
- Heavy Equipment Operator
- Highway Construction Or Maintenance Worker
- Hunter Or Trapper
- Lifeguard
- Mail Carrier
- Miner
- Messenger
- Nursery Worker
- Parking Meter Collector Or Repairer
- Park Ranger
- Park Caretaker
- Pest Controller
- Railroad Worker
- Roofer
- Roustabout
- Ski Resort Instructor Or Worker
- Timber Cutting And Logging Worker
- Tour Or Sightseeing Guide
- Tree Planter
- Tree Surgeon Or Tree Trimmer
- Well Driller
- Window Cleaner
- Zookeeper

Two years of college or specialized training usually necessary:

- Athlete
- Athletic Coach
- Firefighter
- Forestry Technician
- Surveyor
- Survey Technician
- Police Officer

Four or more years of college usually necessary:

- Anthropologist
- Archaeologist
- Biologist
- Civil Engineer
- Conservation Scientist
- Farm Manager
- Forester
- Geologist
- Geophysicist
- Landscape Architect
- Mining Engineer
- Petroleum Engineer

For more information about a particular career, visit your local library or career-resource center and ask for an updated version of the **Occupational Outlook Handbook** which is published by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Source: ***Occupational Outlook Quarterly****, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Winter 1994-1995*

Questions To Ask When Proof Reading Your Resume

Review this check list each time you design a new resume or update/revise your old copy, and ask yourself the following questions:

☐ **Is your resume easy to read?** The employer should be able to get a basic understanding of your skills, abilities, and background in less than one minute. This means writing short sentences; making use of titles, subtitles, and bullet statements (indented statements highlighting and listing skills/accomplishments); and creating a layout that is attractive and not overcrowded with text.

☐ **Is your resume focused?** The employer should have no question about what type of position/responsibilities you would be capable of assuming in the workplace. Be specific; avoid being too general. Your resume should not give the reader the impression that you are just targeting any available job openings that are offered to the general public. Know what you want and let the resume show that you have a direction/purpose.

☐ **Have you included all of your positive qualities and accomplishments?** Be sure to include all of the most impressive accomplishments from your work history and educational training. Make certain that this information relates to the position you are targeting.

☐ **Is there any information that could be perceived as negative?** Only include information that focuses on your job-related abilities, background/training, and accomplishments. Avoid including personal information and any bad experiences you may have had with previous employers.

☐ **Have you double checked your resume for any spelling or grammatical errors?** Your resume should be reviewed at least six different times before it is ready to be used in your job search. If you have access to a computer or word processor, take advantage of any spell-checking/grammar-checking functions that may be available.

☐ **Would you be impressed with this resume if you were an employer?** The resume should be impressive enough to secure a personal interview. Be critical. If it doesn't present you in the best possible way, rework it.

Tip: *Always try to have other people review your resume. Do you know anyone who is working in your career field, responsible for reviewing resumes, an educational instructor, a job counselor, or a friend or family member who can help? Try to find two or three people who can offer you some suggestions and constructive criticism.*

Inspirational Quotes

"All things are difficult before they are easy." **John Norley**

"Man's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions." **Oliver Wendell Holmes**

"Destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice." **Anonymous**

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."
Eleanor Roosevelt

"The highest reward for a person's toil is not what they get for it, but what they become by it." **John Ruskin**

"The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little extra."
Anonymous

"Progress always involves risk, you can't steal second base and keep your foot on first." **Frederick Wilcox**

"All glory comes from daring to begin." **Eugene F. Ware**

"It sometimes seems that intense desire creates not only its own opportunities, but its own talents." **Eric Hoffer**

"A will finds a way." **Orison Swett Marden**

Older Workers: Remaining Employable

Corporate downsizing and rising health-care costs hit the older members of the work force the hardest. Many of these workers lose their jobs, retire earlier than expected, or remain in jobs they no longer find challenging. In addition, technology further complicates the situation.

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) reports half of what you need to know on your job today will be obsolete in five years.

So, how do you remain employable in this type of job market? AARP provides the following suggestions:

> **Become involved** in activities that keep your options open.

> **Keep active** in your profession. Keep your network active, and join professional and civic organizations.

> **Get involved** in a small business as a volunteer or paid consultant or do some other paid work on the side.

> **Target** growing companies. Your research can be conducted in your local libraries. Read the business section of your local newspaper. What industries or companies seem to be expanding or recording profits?

> **Maintain** your present job and level of responsibility, create a plan to keep your skills current, or take on a mentoring role for younger employees. This will help you remain employable at your current place of work.

> **Analyze** your skills, seek feedback from coworkers to see how they view your best skills, document your skills by compiling a list of various projects you have worked on, and know your backup options/marketable skills.

> **Have** an up-to-date copy of your resume prepared. Often the lack of a resume keeps people from responding to an opportunity.

> **Be prepared** for interviewing. As an example, make sure your clothing is suitable and updated for the position. Be ready to present your strengths, and show how they apply to the organization's needs.

> **Brainstorm** with people you know well and give them as much information about you as possible when you plan to retrain for a new career. Enroll in a career planning course at a local college or meet with a career counselor at a local job training/job search program. Consider developing and refining your skills with courses and seminars.

> **Maintain** physical and mental fitness through weight control, good nutrition, and exercise.

Source: The American Association of Retired Persons

Did You Know...*According to a study done at the State University of New York at Bingamton, for both white and blue-collar workers, on-the-job productivity increases as you get older?*

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passage

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For more information, call 1-800-345-5443 or write to PASSAGE, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.

Statistics, Trends, and Ideas

Upgrading Your Education

Professionals such as teachers, doctors, computer operators, lawyers, accountants, and electronic-equipment repairers upgrade their education on a regular basis by attending classes and seminars. What efforts are you making to upgrade your knowledge and to stay competitive in the job market?

GED Students Did You Know...?

According to the most recent government figures, nearly 800,000 people took the GED test in 1993--the last year this information was recorded and analyzed. That figure is up from 734,000 in 1988.

New Study: Women and Work

A survey of American women ages 18 to 55, by the Families and Work Institute for the Whirlpool Foundation, indicates that the traditional role of men as the principal economic provider and women as the nurturer no longer holds true. The study shows that family and work life/responsibilities can co-exist for women and that women value their roles as parents and providers.

Responses from the women who were surveyed include:

Employment (Current Work Status)

- Work Full Time - 45%
- Homemaker - 17%
- Work Part Time - 15%
- Self Employed - 8%
- Student - 7%
- Not Working or Looking For Work - 4%
- Unemployed - 4%
- Retired - 1%

Income (Proportion of Family Income Contributed By Employed Women)

- All - 18%
- More Than Half - 11%
- About Half - 26%
- Less Than Half - 44%

Attitude ("It is my responsibility to take care of the people in my family.")

- Strongly/Somewhat Agree - 88%
- Strongly/Somewhat Disagree - 11%

Winner Vs. Loser

The winner is always part of the answer.

The loser is always part of the problem.

The winner always has a program.

The loser always has an excuse.

The winner says, "Let me do it for you."

The loser says, "That's not my job."

The winner sees an answer to every problem.

The loser sees a problem for every answer.

The winner sees a green near every sandtrap.

The loser sees two or three sandtraps near every green.

The winner says, "It may be difficult, but it's possible."

The loser says, "It may be possible, but it's too difficult."

Source: Unknown

Ten Easy Ways To Boost Your Confidence

1. Establish Eye Contact With Five Strangers Every Day.
2. Become Attuned To Nonverbal Cues From Others.
3. Strike Up A Conversation With Someone You Don't Know.
4. Ask Open-Ended Questions To Develop Conversations.
5. Firm Up Your Vocabulary.
6. Bounce Back From Your Slip-Ups Rather Than Belittling Yourself.
7. Attend Some Social Gatherings Alone.
8. Be Mobile At Parties And Business Meetings.
9. Prepare In Advance For Situations That Make You Nervous.
10. Trim The "T" From "I Can't."

Source: USA Today

STUDENTaccesspage **Focus: Follow-Up Calls**

This month's STUDENTaccesspage is a continuation of February's article "Getting Past The Screen." This excerise will help you when you get past the secretary and you are speaking with the employer and attempting to schedule an interview.

Before and during each follow-up call to an employer, consider these suggestions:

1. Review the information that was highlighted in your customized cover letter and in your resume.
2. Before you call, practice the conservation out loud. You can even ask a friend to play the role of the employer.
3. Call the employer several days after he/she has received your resume/cover letter.
4. Make an effort to sound professional and confident. Try the following approaches which are commonly used by telemarketers: a) Dress professionally. Don't worry that the employer cannot see you. It will enhance your professionalism. b) Avoid creating annoying sounds that can be heard over the phone. Examples include chewing gum, drinking coffee, and smoking. In addition, make sure that the television or radio is not turned on, no children are playing, or no background noise is created. Find a quiet atmosphere for this crucial phase of your job search. c) Sit straight in your chair. Having good posture will improve your speaking voice.
5. When you get the employer on the phone, greet him/her; mention your name and the name of any coworker or acquaintance who may have served as a referral for the job; remind this individual that you have recently sent a letter/resume to his or her attention; and highlight the position you are targeting. Realize that the employer is busy and that you only have a few minutes to make your point and to secure an interview.
6. If the employer is receptive, briefly mention several main points from your cover letter--accomplishments and qualities that directly relate to the potential job opening and relate your knowledge of the company. Be prepared to go into detail and provide examples of your work and educational history.
7. Next, ask the employer for the opportunity to schedule a personal interview to discuss your qualifications in greater detail.
8. Be prepared for positive and negative responses from employers. Some employers will simply state that the company has nothing available and will try to end the conservation. If this occurs, ask if it would be appropriate to call again in three months. In addition, if the employer states that he or she does not remember your letter or has not received it, offer to provide a summary of your abilities on the phone or to mail another copy immediately. At this point, know that you have done your best.

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Volume 6
Issue 10

June
1995

Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter

In This Issue...

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The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

Until We Meet Again: PASSAGE 1989 to ???

We regret having to announce that Section 353 funding for the PASSAGE Newsletter will not be available for the 1995-1996 program year. Funding limitations, along with the number of Section 353 applications for new statewide priorities and the state and national restructuring of programs, were related as factors that led to the difficult decision.

As we continue to explore new organizational projects, our sincerest appreciation of the positive relationships established with the Bureau, PASSAGE's guest writers, and our statewide network of readers will remain important to us. What we have learned from those relationships has helped our organization to become a respected leader in the field of adult education, training, and career development.

Since 1989, the nonstop feedback about the benefits of the PASSAGE Newsletter was always welcomed and useful to us. Through solicited reader surveys and unsolicited phone calls and letters, we never grew tired of discovering how organizations and individuals were utilizing the material presented in this publication. As PASSAGE increased its circulation and established its literary goals and standards, what was once only a vision for a specialty publication had the opportunity to develop into a widely-accepted source of professional workplace and job-skills' information.

The Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee, our Board of Directors, and the PASSAGE Newsletter Staff and Volunteers (guest writers, proofreaders, and bulk-mailing assistants) are truly thankful for having had the opportunity to serve Pennsylvania's adult-basic and literacy-education community. It has been a rewarding experience, and many great professional relationships will surely continue because of introductions made through the design and production of PASSAGE: Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter.

Sincerely,

Bernadette Mangie

John S. Goberish

Evaluating An Occupation: There Is More To A Job Than Just Earnings.

Many people believe that a good job must always consist of high earnings. While a good income can be quite important, there is more to work than just wages. Other important concerns when evaluating an occupation include the following:

- Benefits
- Projected Growth And Openings
- Unemployment Rate
- Advancement Potential
- Nature Of The Work And Working Conditions

Depending on the importance you give each of these factors, a good job might be one with lower than average earnings.

Benefits

Employee benefits, once minor additions to wages and salaries, are increasingly important factors in defining a good job. In 1993, benefits averaged about 29 percent of total compensation costs. Some benefits, such as health and life insurance or subsidized child care, are virtually the same as cash, because they would otherwise have to be paid for out of earnings. Paid holidays and vacation leave improve the recipients' quality of life. Most employers also provide other benefits that add to the quality of a job, such as sick leave. Some employers, like airlines, provide free or subsidized travel, while retailers may provide discounts on merchandise.

Projected Growth And Openings

The projected growth rate and the number of job openings serve to measure how easy or difficult it will be to find a job in an occupation, and, perhaps, also to be promoted. These projections are discussed in the **Occupational Outlook Handbook** (which is available at a library or resource center). In some cases, information on competition for jobs is also given. Some high-wage occupations available without a college degree, such as the precision-production occupations, are not expected to grow. Others are expected to grow about as fast as the average for all workers, including engineering and science technicians; construction workers; and mechanics, installers, and repairers. Registered nurse and most health technician and technologist occupations are projected to grow much faster than average.

More job openings result from the need to replace workers who transfer to different occupations, retire, or stop working for some other reason than from growth. For example, employment of secretaries is projected to increase by 386,000 jobs by 2005, but net replacement needs are expected to provide more than twice as many openings. Even occupations with little or no projected job growth have some openings. For example, precision production occupations are expected to have 68,000 job openings annually due to net replacement needs.

Unemployment Rate

Some occupations have high unemployment rates. This does not necessarily disqualify them as high-paying jobs. Those that provide high hourly earnings and unemployment compensation can still yield a high annual income.

Furthermore, many workers in these occupations do have steady year-round jobs. High unemployment rates are common in many construction occupations, such as carpenter and electrician, as well as manufacturing jobs, such as assembler and machine operator.

Unemployment rates actually reflect two kinds of unemployment: cyclical and long-term. Recessions and seasonal changes in production create cyclical unemployment in many occupations.

Continued on page three

Continued from page two

During slack periods, workers may face temporary layoffs but can expect to be reemployed when conditions improve. On the other hand, long-term unemployment or even permanent job loss may be caused by restructuring or plant closing. Jobs in organizations or industries with good long-term prospects are obviously more desirable. Even if you lose your job, you are more likely to find another one in such an industry.

Advancement Potential

Some occupations offer a natural progression of career advancement, such as from electrician apprentice to journey level electrician supervisor or contractor. Workers in other occupations may need to carve their own paths to success, following less traditional/ conventional routes. Still other occupations or jobs offer few if any chances for advancement. Often, promotion potential varies from employer to employer. In general, fast growing occupations and organizations offer better prospects, at least without the need to change employers, but small organizations may offer broader responsibilities and opportunities to learn a wider range of skills. In any job, it is important to be ready to act on opportunities as they arise.

Nature Of The Work

For most people, a good job is one that they find interesting, that fully uses their skills, or that satisfies their needs in other ways. Almost everybody appreciates a job where he/she can see the results of his/her work and feel a sense of accomplishment. Others seek a job related to an interest, such as cars, music, or children. Helping others is often the central satisfaction for those in health, teaching, or social work occupations. Satisfying aspects of a job may include analyzing data or information; coordinating events and activities; teaching or mentoring; selling to or persuading others; operating or fixing machinery; or designing/creating new ideas, concepts, or works of art.

Other characteristics that define a good job include the level of physical exertion necessary, cleanliness and safety of the workplace, level of contact with people, ability to decide how work is to be done, and the level of stress. For some, no amount of money is worth the grueling hours and stress that many physicians live with; the physical exertion, danger, or dirt faced by coal miners and some construction workers; or the boredom of assembly line work. Others find job pressures exciting, don't mind the danger or dirt, or welcome the stress.

For many, working with people that they like and respect and having a good supervisor are essential elements of a good job. They may also want an employer who has goals and policies they respect. Likewise, some workers seek the security of a salaried job with an established, stable organization. Others find stimulation in risk-taking-- running their own business, working for a fledgling organization, or selling on commission.

Where a job is located may also be important. Some people do not want a long commute or a geographic relocation. For them, a good job is one that is available where they live.

The steady hours that high pay demands may be just the opposite of what a worker wants. Some only want part-time work, due to family, school, or other responsibilities.

Conclusion

Any job has positive and negative factors that employees should understand. One factor seldom makes a job good or bad. Get to know all you can about occupations you are considering. It is extremely important to research the entry-level requirements and other characteristics so that you will know what to expect out of the job. Above all, remember that it is important to make a career choice that is good for you. The demand for skilled workers will remain strong.

Source: ***Occupational Outlook Quarterly/Winter 1994-1995****, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics*

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For more information, call 1-800-345-5443 or write to: PASSAGE, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.

STUDENTaccesspage Focus: Finding Out About Yourself

Before you begin to design your job-search materials and to meet with potential employers, you need to collect various pieces of information about yourself that will help you present your best personal features/ accomplishments during the job search. This exercise will help you organize statements and facts that will form the foundation of your job-search materials and of the information you highlight during each interview.

While gearing your answers to meet the needs of the employer/job is important, try to record all of your initial ideas/responses. You can edit and sort out the most relevant at a later time. Please answer each question:

1. What skills do you have that employers would consider valuable?

2. What talents, abilities, and interests do you have?

3. What motivates you to work and makes you proud of your achievements?

4. What educational and work experiences do you currently possess?

5. What personality traits (temperament and attitude) do you have that would be beneficial to an employer?

6. What special knowledge or skills have you acquired that can enable you to stand out from other job seekers?

7. What are your most valued achievements/ accomplishments in life?

8. What is your view on work (your work ethic)?

9. Do you like to work with people?

10. What is the best work environment which enables you to be productive?

11. Do you like helping people, working with information, collecting data, or utilizing tools/ machinery?

12. Are you willing to move to find employment?

13. What type of organization would interest you?

14. Have you considered self-employment possibilities?

15. What is the lowest yearly salary that you can accept?

16. Are you willing to take responsibility for your decisions and to be accountable?

Do your answers match the requirements of the occupations/career fields that are of interest to you? Use these answers as a starting point for writing your resume. ✍

Trends and Helpful Suggestions

Interested In Continuing Your Education?

1. Fifty-three percent of 365 career-service offices surveyed this spring by the National Association of Colleges and Employers reported increased recruiting activity on campus, and starting salaries are up as well.

2. This economy and the changing workplace have taught students and schools many important lessons. For example...
   - There is more to obtaining employment than graduating and receiving a diploma.
   - Internships and various career-related work experiences are extremely valuable and improve employment opportunities.
   - A solid personal job-search/marketing plan is essential. This includes professional job search materials and starting the networking process at least one year before graduation.

3. The results of many published reports and surveys have established the general understanding that there is a definite connection between education and higher earnings. In addition, a new Census Bureau survey shows for the first time that there is also a connection between workers' education levels and increased productivity. The study, which was conducted for the Department of Education, reveals that increasing work-force education has twice the effect on productivity as the same increase in capital stock (equipment, machinery, and buildings). The survey was based on interviews with managers and owners of about 3,000 businesses which have 20 or more workers.

Feeling Refreshed

As you tackle new responsibilities/challenges that are ever present in the classroom, at work, in your job search, and even at home, do you feel energized and ready to handle the challenges of each new day? If not, consider the following information.

On the topic of sleep, most doctors agree that:

- Newborns need 16 to 18 hours of sleep.
- Four-year olds need 10 hours of sleep.
- Teenagers should have about nine hours of sleep.
- Young adults need only eight hours for about the next 30 years of their lives.
- Individuals past the age of 65 can feel refreshed after only four hours of sleep.

Are you getting the sufficient amount of sleep each day?

Greatest Sources of Stress

In the March 1995 issue of Prevention, the results of the publication's National Stress Survey were published. Eleven thousand individuals from across the United States responded to the survey. According to the results, the number-one greatest source of stress is personal finances, and the second greatest source of stress is the workplace.

Inspirational Quotes

"A man is literally what he thinks." -- James Allen

"The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today." -- Franklin D. Roosevelt

"What the mind of man can conceive and believe, the mind of man can achieve." -- Napoleon Hill

"In order to succeed, we must first believe that we can." -- Michael Korda

"The greatest discovery of any generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes." -- Albert Schweitzer

"Life is ten percent what happens to me and 90 percent how I react to it." -- Lou Holtz

"One man with courage is a majority." -- Andrew Johnson

"The scars you acquire by exercising courage will never make you feel inferior." -- D.A. Batitisa

"Courage is doing what you're afraid to do. There can be no courage unless you're scared." -- Eddie Rickenbacher

"He who loses wealth loses much; he who loses a friend loses more; but he that loses courage loses all." -- Cervantes

Terms For Today's and Tomorrow's Workplace

E-Mail

E-Mail stands for electronic mail, and it began with a U.S. Department of Research project which created the technology to allow individuals to exchange information over computers. Today, according to the Electronic Messaging Association, there are 20 million users in this country who together send billions of messages a year. This technology provides instant communication (both in the workplace and at home) through use of the computer and telephone lines and also enables users to have written records of their transmissions and messages.

Techno-Literacy

Today, a large percentage of employees needs to know how to do more than just turn on a computer and access the word processor. Now...employees are expected to be techno-literate. This means knowing what technology and computer software are available to make your job more efficient and productive. To stay ahead of the game, employees should educate themselves on a regular basis (classes, magazines, books, and clubs).

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is an individual's judgment about his or her ability to do something. It doesn't refer to the actual skills people have, but to their belief that they can actually apply those skills on the job.

"No Self Efficacy, No Performance," by Dr. Robert F. Mager, Mager Associates, Inc.

Corporate University

Many forward-thinking companies are making training and education key components in their business strategy or vision. The total support/implementation of a continuous company-designed system that links training/education to specific business goals is called a corporate university.

Not necessarily the same as Disney University or McDonald's "Hamburger U", the corporate universities of the 1990s are not always located on a campus. Training may be on-site at the sponsoring company's facility or at an off-site facility. Today, there are more than 1,500 corporate universities in the United States, and these programs are usually found in companies with 1,000 or more employees.

The reasons for the development and recent growth of corporate universities are many. Examples include being able to keep up or stay ahead of the competition, realizing the long-term benefits of investing in the employees, and establishing a more cost-effective and consistent training program.

Also, corporate universities provide educational training and support to valued customers and suppliers who are essential parts of a business' success.

The Labor Market Through The Year 2005

According to the information compiled from various U.S. Department of Labor publications:

- Only about 25 percent of the work force have jobs manufacturing products, most of the rest of the work force are employed in the "service" sector. These jobs are in government, business services, health care, retail trade, and other fields that do not produce goods.
- Over 20 million new jobs are projected to be added to our work force over the next 10 years. That would increase our labor force to about 150 million people by the year 2005--a 20 percent increase. While many new jobs will be created, many more existing jobs will also be affected by changing technologies, new products and techniques, foreign trade, and other factors.
- Two out of three workers employed by businesses now work for small employers--those employing fewer than 500 workers. While large employers remain an important part of our economy, small employers have become increasingly important. *According to research conducted by the Small Business Administration:*
  - Over 98 percent of all U.S. businesses are considered small.
  - Small businesses employ 56 percent of the entire private work force.
  - Small businesses account for 38 percent of all sales in the U.S.
  - Small businesses contribute 39 percent to the gross national product.

Time Heals All: Survivors Of The Steel Mill Closings

The PASSAGE staff got its start from assisting dislocated workers with their job-search campaigns and by providing GED classes. For our last issue, we thought it would be appropriate to take a look at the experiences of five individuals who dealt with dislocation from the steel mills in the 1980s and to see how these individuals are doing today...

Where did the time go? For most of us, it is hard to believe that more than ten years have passed since companies across the United States started reacting to the changing labor market and economy by closing their operations or downsizing (laying off workers).

Terms such as "dislocated" (an unemployed worker) and "underemployed" (a former dislocated worker who is earning less money at his or her new job) became common words in our daily vocabulary. However, no matter what term was used to describe the situation...the results were the same. Thousands of people found themselves unemployed (through no fault of their own). Most had no hope of ever returning to their former jobs and no job prospects.

The new reality was difficult to handle and the future appeared bleak. The job expectations of the past were gone. Many people had to realize that they wouldn't work their entire lives at only one place and retire. Education and retraining suddenly became extremely important, and these dislocated workers had to develop a new attitude and approach to the workplace.

The Initial Shock

"I felt real lost", states Emile Razaire thirteen years after he lost his general maintenance position at a major steel corporation. "I kept asking myself, 'Why me?' Nineteen years down the drain. I was 40 years old, and I had to start over. All I ever knew was the mill. I didn't know what to do."

John Luce, the father of two young children (now 18 and 15 years old), remembers, "I sulked, collected unemployment, and blamed myself." Despite the fact that he has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education, John originally chose a job in a melt shop. He recalls, "I went where the money was. I wanted my wife to have the opportunity to raise our children and not have to work. As a teacher, I wouldn't have made enough money for our situation. So, when I got laid off, I was depressed and just kept hoping the mill would reopen."

The need to blame someone was a feeling that many dislocated workers initially seemed to share. The new reality was hard to accept, and many workers continued to wish everything would return to the old way. Most individuals were unprepared and were caught by surprise.

Adapting To The Change

"Before the layoffs occurred, my coworkers in the steel mill thought I was crazy when I started to prepare myself and my finances for what seemed to be the inevitable. I could see it coming for a few years," says John Hogan. When the layoffs came, John recognized immediately that things had changed and that he was going to have to make sacrifices to support his family. Those sacrifices included many temporary jobs at various nuclear-power plants throughout the country. Today, he's a real "travelin' man." Since loosing his job as a steelworker, John has lived and worked in Wyoming, Colorado, Connecticut, Texas, Maryland, and Vermont.

Alex Garland also wasted no time. He recognized his need for additional education. After the mill closed its doors, he began attending a college near his home. With the aid of state funding and grants, he earned a degree in Criminal Justice and pursued his lifelong dream of working in law enforcement. For Alex, dislocation eventually created a positive change.

The Need For Two Incomes

For many men...retraining, starting college late in life, relocating to find employment, or accepting lower paying jobs became a common way of life during the 1980s. The dislocation of the primary "bread winner" had a great effect on the family...especially the wives. Many wives had to return to work to keep their families together. Also, women who had never worked before found themselves in the changing work force.

Lois Bishop realized that she would have to reenter the job market. Lois recalls, "I was in a panic.

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My husband lost his job, and I hadn't worked as a practical nurse since 1960. Going back to nursing seemed out of the question because technology had created many changes." Together, the couple decided they both needed to look for work in order to make ends meet. Being a believer that no honest job is beneath her, Lois obtained a job in a school cafeteria and remained employed at the school for nine years. Today, she is a valued employee at an Arby's Restaurant and is working because she wants to...not because she has little choice in the matter. Now, after much hard work and faith, the Bishop's situation is stable, and they consider themselves fortunate.

Positive Healing and Change

The trauma of lost jobs, financial adversity, and hoping for the past to return is over for these former "dislocated" workers. Today, they are happy, productive individuals who face the future with hope.

After having to deal with unemployment three times during the last thirteen years, John Luce is happily working as a stock broker for A.G. Edwards. "I go to work in a suit now, I have weekends and holidays off, and I can even play golf during the week." John and his wife, Karen, both acknowledge that having to "shift gears in his life" has been for the best. Now they have more time for each other and their children.

John Hogan recently completed an extensive course for certification as an over-the-road truck driver. When job opportunities started to slow down at nuclear power plants, he knew it was time to pursue a new interest. John exclaims, "I love to travel. I was forced into it thirteen years ago, and now I enjoy it. Where else could I find a job that pays me for what I like to do the most? You couldn't pay me enough to go back to the mill."

Alex Garland is a happy man, too. He loves his work and has experienced opportunities he never would have had if he was still working in the mill. Since his dislocation and entrance into the law enforcement field, he has been a member of President Clinton's motorcade, inspected high-security areas, and visited many states and countries.

Lois may have been timid in the early 1980s when she was forced to return to work. However, today, she is a self-assured, confident woman who doesn't underestimate herself. Acknowledging her positive attributes, Lois states, "I'm the only person here over 50, but they count on me to be more responsible and to be a mentor to younger workers. It may not be the most glamorous job in the world, but I like it here."

Last is Emile Razaire. The end of his story is a little different. Less than eighteen months after the shutdown, he was called back to his job. Since the mid 1980s, the work force at local steel mills has been greatly reduced and technology and automation have increased production and quality. "Times change, and I have learned a great deal from my experiences. I feel lucky...I'm right where I want to be."

The passage of time has changed the lives of many individuals. These five people had the strength and stamina to survive and adapt to new workplaces.

passage

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June 1995

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